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ΣΤΟ ΟΜΗΡΙΚΟ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΑΪΚΟ ΕΠΟΣ

HUMAN AND NON HUMAN
IN HOMERIC AND ARCHAIC EPIC

CENTRE FOR ODYSSEAN STUDIES

HUMAN AND NON HUMAN IN HOMERIC AND ARCHAIC EPIC

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Editors
Menelaos Christopoulos
Machi Païzi-Apostolopoulou

ITHACA 2024

ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΟΔΥΣΣΕΙΑΚΩΝ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ

ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟ ΚΑΙ ΜΗ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟ ΣΤΟ ΟΜΗΡΙΚΟ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΑΪΚΟ ΕΠΟΣ

Από τα Πρακτικά
του ΙΔ΄ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου για την Οδύσσεια
(διαδικτυακά Οκτώβριος 2021-Μάρτιος 2022)

Επιστημονική επιμέλεια
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Μαχη Παϊζη-Αποστολοπουλου

ΙΘΑΚΗ 2024

PREFACE

During the last years a big discussion has been taking place concerning the meaning and the content of human sciences, their role in education and their impact in modern societies. Part of this discussion seems to be the utility of the study of classical languages, such as Greek and Latin, and the necessity of this teaching in secondary and university education.

As the Homeric Epics have always had an important place in the hard core of this education we thought that it would be interesting to examine the notion of "human", both literally and metaphorically, in the Homeric poems themselves. That is how we chose the topic of the last International Conference organized by the *Centre for Odyssean Studies* on «Human and Non-Human in Homeric and Archaic Poetry».

We initially thought that this would be another conference as the ones we have been organizing all these years with the generous support of the Municipality of Ithaca. But no, it was not that simple, Covid-19 was there and the Civil Protection would not allow us to organize a live conference in Ithaca as we have always been doing. So, instead, we made a video conference, one year later, which was extremely successful due to the competence and technical support of Panagiota Taktikou and Georges Charitatos, doctoral students of the University of Patras, talented and efficient researchers, to whom we are extremely grateful. Of course such a conference could not be done in three or four days given the hour difference in the participants' respective countries and their smaller availability during the day time compared to usual conferences. It took us several months to complete sessions of four or five speeches each time; this, however, gave us the chance to meet several times in an academic year, an unexpected pleasure which was not foreseen in the beginning.

ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ

Κατά τη διάρκεια των τελευταίων χρόνων έχει ανοίξει μια μεγάλη συζήτηση σχετικά με το νόημα και το περιεχόμενο των ανθρωπιστικών επιστημών, το ρόλο τους στην εκπαίδευση και την επίπτωσή τους στις σύγχρονες κοινωνίες. Μέρος αυτής της συζήτησης φαίνεται να είναι η χρησιμότητα της μελέτης των κλασικών γλωσσών, όπως είναι τα αρχαία Ελληνικά και τα Λατινικά, και η σκοπιμότητα της διδασκαλίας τους στη δευτεροβάθμια και στην τριτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση. Καθώς τα Ομηρικά έπη είχαν πάντοτε σημαίνουσα θέση στο πλαίσιο της ανθρωπιστικής παιδείας, θεωρήσαμε ότι θα είχε σημασία να εξετάσουμε την έννοια του «ανθρώπινου / ανθρωπιστικού» στην κυριολεκτική και τη μεταφορική του διάσταση στα ίδια τα Ομηρικά έπη. Έτσι οδηγηθήκαμε στην επιλογή του θέματος του τελευταίου διεθνούς συνεδρίου που οργάνωσε το *Κέντρο Οδυσσειακών Σπουδών*: «Human and Non-Human in Homeric and Archaic Poetry».

Νομίζαμε αρχικά ότι θα ήταν ένα ακόμη συνέδριο όπως αυτά που διοργανώνει το Κέντρο κατά τη διάρκεια πολλών ετών. Αλλά δεν ήταν τόσο απλό. Ο Covid-19 είχε ήδη γίνει μέρος της ζωής μας και η Υπηρεσία Πολιτικής Προστασίας δεν μας επέτρεψε να διοργανώσουμε ζωντανά το συνέδριο, όπως κάναμε όλα αυτά τα χρόνια, πάντοτε με την υποστήριξη του Δήμου Ιθάκης. Έτσι το συνέδριο έγινε διαδικτυακά, ένα χρόνο αργότερα, και είχε μεγάλη επιτυχία κυρίως χάρη στις ικανότητες και την τεχνική επάρκεια της Παναγιώτας Τακτικού και του Γιώργη Χαριτάτου, υποψήφιων διδακτόρων του Πανεπιστημίου Πατρών και προικισμένων ερευνητών, προς τους οποίους εκφράζουμε και από εδώ τις θερμές ευχαριστίες μας. Φυσικά, στη μορφή αυτή, το συνέδριο δεν μπορούσε να ολοκληρωθεί σε τρεις ή τέσσερις ημέρες, χρειάστηκε να γίνουν πολλές συναντήσεις με τέσσερις ή πέντε ομιλητές η καθεμία και σε διάρκεια αρκετών μηνών, ώστε να

For all the above reasons we are proud to publish the Proceedings of this particular conference. The present volume shows how things can be accomplished even under negative circumstances and, of course, it continues to nourish Homeric scholarship with fresh scientific material, something that remains one of the major aims of the *Centre for Odyssean Studies*.

The editors of the volume

Menelaos Christopoulos Machi Païzi – Apostolopoulou

καλυφθεί η διαφορά ώρας στις χώρες των συμμετεχόντων αλλά και η διαθεσιμότητά τους, καθώς δεν αναμενόταν να είναι εύκαιροι όλη τη διάρκεια της ημέρας όπως συμβαίνει στα δια ζώσης συνέδρια. Αυτό, εξάλλου, είχε και τη θετική του πλευρά, καθώς μας έδωσε την ευκαιρία να συναντηθούμε πολλές φορές μέσα σε ένα ακαδημαϊκό έτος, κάτι που δεν είχαμε προβλέψει στον αρχικό σχεδιασμό.

Για όλους αυτούς τους λόγους είμαστε ιδιαίτερα ευτυχείς που δημοσιεύονται τα Πρακτικά του συγκεκριμένου συνεδρίου. Ο τόμος αυτός αποδεικνύει πως τα πράγματα μπορούν να γίνουν ακόμη και κάτω από αντίξοες συνθήκες και, φυσικά, τροφοδοτεί με νέο και πολύ ενδιαφέρον υλικό την ομηρική έρευνα, κάτι που αποτελεί μείζονα στόχο του *Κέντρου Οδυσσειακών Σπουδών*.

Οι επιμελητές της έκδοσης

Μενελαος Χριστοπουλος Μαχη Παϊζη - Αποστολοπουλου

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I. GODS AND HUMANS

I. ΘΕΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΙ

Claude Calame

Humankind and the Civilization of Men in Homeric Poetry: A Poetic "Anthropopoiesis"

"Human" and "non human" in Homeric and archaic epic poetry? Thus on one hand a definition of "human", in an effort to grasp in an anthropological and critical perspective, the corresponding native categories of a different culture, here the Greek "archaic" culture; and that in a double perspective: the human as such, but also the human in contrast with what is not considered as human in the representations of an other culture. On the other hand, as far as preclassical Greece is concerned, are at stake the contours of the "human" as it is represented in the epic poems attributed to Homer, as far as we are concerned the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: the human as narrative and poetic creation.

1. The men of the *Iliad*

Through the term *ánthr<u>o</u>pos*, used generically in the singular or collectively in the plural, the class of human appears to correspond to an indigenous category. That is already apparent in Homeric poetry, where, for instance in the *Iliad*, the human race is defined by mortality in contrast with the gods. Warning Diomedes in his attempt to fight Aeneas, Apollo proclaims: "Take care, son of Tydaeus, draw back! Do not foster intentions (*phronéein*) equal to those of the gods! The race (*phúlon*) of immortal gods and the race of men who walk the earth will never be equal." (*Iliad* 5, 440-442) Etymologically, there is a difference in nature between immortals and mortals, a difference of *phúein*. And the measure for this distinction is spatial: while the gods live on Olympus, or more generally in the heavens, men go about on the earth, as the adjective *epikhthónios* notably attests. Used to designate man in general in Homeric poetry, this adjective can also qualify the *brotoí* who then become "mortals upon the earth"; the distinguishing

characteristic of living on earth is thus added to the essential characteristic of mortality. Before engaging in a duel with Glaucos, whom he does not recognize, and trying to identify his adversary, Diomedes, remembering the lesson of Apollo's warning, immediately identifies his Trojan adversary as belonging to the race of "mortal men" (*katathnētoì ánthropoi*; 6, 123), as opposed to the race of "immortals who descend from the sky", heavenly divinities.[1]

However, in the same *Iliad*, we learn as well from Agamemnon that the human (*ánthrōpoi*; 9, 134) are divided into men (*ándres*) on one hand and women (*gunaîkes*) on the other, who can unite in a reciprocal act of love on a common bed. The semantic distinction between *ánthrōpos* and *anḗr* allows for the Greeks to distinguish between man as *Mensch* and man as *Mann*. Without taking into account etymology of the first term, the linguistic comparison in the indo-european field attributes to the second, *anḗr*, the qualities of force and bravery of a warrior. With regards to *gunḗ*, etymology can only associate the term with a very generalized femininity, perhaps in relation to the wife as an object for a suitor.[2]

Whether it concerns beings of the male or female sex, it is in particular in contrast with the gods that Odysseus tries to define the different people whom he encounters in his wanderings in a western Mediterranean that, without any geographical point of reference for Homeric Greece, corresponds largely to a fictional space. On his floating island, Aeolus, dear to the immortals, lives like a god. With his wife and his six daughters given in marriage to his six sons, he passes his days in feasting and rejoicing and his nights in a shared bed, in endogamy. And when the companion sent by Odysseus to scout out the island of Circe hears the beauty of the voice emanating from the nymph's home, he wonders whether he is in the pres-

1. Homer, *Iliad* 1. 272 and 24. 505, and then 5 440-442 and 6. 119-129. On the contrast between *brotoí*, mortals as distinguished by their diet, and the immortals who are *ámbrotoi*, cf. e.g. *Iliad* 22. 8-9, *Odyssey* 1. 31-32 and 5. 195-197; the two words share the same root as the Latin *mortuus*. See also Pindar, *Pythian* 10. 28 which speaks of an *éthnos brotôn*.

2. Homer, *Iliad* 9, 132-134. See Chantraine 1968, 87-91.

ence of a goddess or of a woman; endowed with seductive powers of divine origin, Circe approaches mortal men only to transform them into animals or to engage with them in an erotic relationship that is contrasted with the faithful wife who waits at home for the return of her husband gone to war.[3] The narrative interaction with these atypical beings in a largely fictive geography thus leads to an implicit definition of a human being. In relation to immortals, naturally, but also in contrast not with animals but with beings who are more or less savage.

2. The human in the *Odyssey*

We will most likely remember that for Odysseus, when he recounts his adventures to the court of Phaeacians as a bard, the mighty Laestrygonians look more like Giants than like men (*ouk ándressin eoikótes*; *Odyssey* 10, 120). They correspond to the Giants that appear in Hesiod's *Theogony* as warriors of exceptional size, associated at the same time with the species of man; Giants who, along with the Phaeacians as well as with the Cyclopes, share in addition a proximity with the gods, according to the terms used by Alcinoos himself in the *Odyssey*; Giants who are nevertheless organized into "savage tribes" (*ágria phûla*; 7, 206), representing a violent mortal people.[4]

So, related to the Giants are also the Cyclopes, who benefit from a far more detailed description on Odysseus' part. These monstrous creatures are presented at once as violent beings, who recognize neither laws nor gods; there are consequently no assemblies, no social or political life, no cultic practices among the Cyclopes who live isolated from one another; but there is no agriculture either, other than wheat and vines that grow spontaneously, as in the golden age; nor is there any navigation, and thus

3. Homer, *Odyssey* 10. 1-12 and 10. 226-228 (cf. 251-257 as well as 12. 143 and 150: Circe as a goddess). On this subject see for example Pucci 1998, 131-178.

4. Homer, *Odyssey* 10. 118-120 as well as 7. 201-206 and 59-60; Hesiod, *Theogony* 50 and 185-186; cf. West 1966, 173 and 220-221. The different traits that implicitly characterize the human race in Homeric poems are enumerated by Baldry 1965, 8-16.

there are neither crafts nor commerce. Polyphemus' approach adds more detail to the portrait: living alone in a cave like each of his fellow creatures, the one-eyed giant will prove to be a mindful shepherd of his flock of goats and sheep, but one who defies the laws of hospitality and who ignores the civilized law of mixing and sharing wine. Recognizing only the authority of his father Poseidon, the earthshaker, the Cyclops will also act as a terrifying anthropophage. Compared to a woody peak amid the mountains, he has nothing in common with the "bread-eating man" (*oudè eo͟ikei andrí ge sitophágo͟i*; 9, 190-191).[5] It is thus by his diet that man distinguishes himself as a civilized being from super- or subhuman creatures. In addition to the general sharing of wine under the aegis of Dionysus and of meat following the sacrificial act that reproduces the ritual sharing between men and gods implemented by Prometheus, the entire process of the production of wheat and the fabrication of bread is essential. Just as in the first contact with the man-eating Laestrygonians, the approach of the Lotophagi who eat the flowers of forgetfulness, the concern is whether the people in question are "men who on the earth eat bread" (*anéres epì chthóni sîton édontes*; 9. 89).[6] The presence of grains and of different forms of cakes at banquets and cultic practices is not only suggestive of the entire process of agricultural activity and of the civilizing action of Demeter; but that also signifies the common and socialized action of men for their nutritional survival as well as in reciprocal communication. At the court of Alcinoos, the king of the Phaeacians, the interventions of the bard Demodocos as well as the epic stories told by Odysseus himself occur in the context of a banquet in

5. Homer, *Odyssey* 9, 105-135 and 187-192, notably; on the complex figure of the Cyclopes in the *Odyssey*, see for example Pucci 1993, translated into English in 1998, 113-130; for other Greek representations of the confrontation between man and monster, see Calame 1985.

6. Homer, *Odyssey* 9. 82-97 and 10. 100-117. The central character of dietary customs between the sharing of sacrificed meat and the diet of "ground wheat", notably in relation to marriage, is the subject of Vernant's study of 1979; the definition of civilization by agricultural production and blood sacrifice on which Odysseus implicitly draws is the subject of Vidal-Naquet's now classic study of 1979/1983.

which bread cakes, meat and wine are abundant. Likewise, Circe celebrates the return of Odysseus and his companions from their descent into Hades with a meal of bread, meat and dark wine; and that before the divine sorceress speaks as an augur to indicate to Odysseus the obstacles that will stand in his way along his journey home to Ithaca; a return home that signifies for the mortal hero the rejection of immortality offered to him successively by the divine women who try to keep him confined in their solitary homes.[7]

3. An epic representation of civilization

Thus, in the *Iliad* as well as in the *Odyssey*, through epic narration and configuration, the human is identified with the series of practices of commensality and of social relations implied by the necessity of surviving the fundamentally precarious condition of man, a condition based on mortality. Far from being defined by a rupture with an "Other" established in a "radical" otherness, men share numerous traits, both good and bad, with the gods as well as with the violent creatures who are, according Hesiod's theogonic narrative, more ancient than mortals. The same is true within the human race, when ethnographic curiosity coupled with the circumstances of history permits Herodotus to compare the Greek way of life with that of their immediate and more distant neighbors; reflections of an anthropological nature on the mainly relative nature of the customs of the peoples of the inhabited earth are capped by the acknowledgement of the existence of a human nature; this *phúsis* to which all men are subject regardless of their ethnicity and culture, of the same reversals of fortune, of the inevitable nature of man's destiny and of the same law of immanent justice! Specific to the classical conception of the mortal's condition, these abrupt reversals of fortune are the driving force behind what Herodotus calls "the

7. Homer, *Odyssey* 9. 5-18 and 12 16-27; see for example Segal 1962/1994. For the travels of Ulysses situated between "supra-" and "infra-human", see the good pages offered by Saïd 2010, 227-254 (= 2011, 170-195).

cycle of human affairs (vicissitudes?)" (*kúklos tôn anthropeíon pregmátoṇ*; 1, 207, 2).[8]

Moreover, the culture of men that is depicted beneath the surface of the military conflict of the *Iliad* or the geographical wanderings of the *Odyssey* corresponds to a very Greek vision of civilization, with limits assigned to man in his contacts with the gods as well as in his mortal practices. We will recall once more the definition given by Herodotus when he recounts the final episode of his account of the Medic wars, at the moment when the Greeks divided into autonomous civic communities finally arrive, in their conflict with the Persians and the barbarians, at an acknowledgement of a single identity: "a common blood, a common language (*homóglo̱sson*), common sanctuaries and sacrifices for the gods, the same cast of mind and the same attitude"; it is in this way that Herodotus defines *tò Hellenikón* (8, 144, 2).[9]

4. The human race: a poetic "anthropopoiesis" and "ecopoiesis"

As it appears in Homeric narratives, the status of the human is defined essentiallythrough communication and in contrast with other anthropomorphic beings: gods on the one hand, marginal beings on the other. Linked to the ephemeral and limited existence imposed by the mortal condition, this status suggests the acknowledgement of a series of rules of communal comportment that immediately establish man not yet as a "political animal" but as a social creature. The communication with other anthropomorphic beings suggests that the limits of man's status are completely

8. Herodotus 3. 65. 4 and 1. 207. 2 (said by Croesus, saved from the pyre); see also 7. 46. 2 and 7. 47. 1, on the brevity of "human life". The principle of immanent justice which drives the narrative and historical action orchestrated by Herodotus is described for example by Darbo-Peschanski 1998.

9. Herodotus 8. 144. 2; see also the very beginning of the *Inquiry*, 1. 4. 4: "Greekness" is contrasted with the Persians and barbarians, in a twofold confrontation of a geographical opposition between Europe and Asia; cf. Hall 2002, 189-194. On the different stages of this awareness of the concept of *Hellenikón*, notably through interposed genealogical stories, see the references given by Fowler 1998.

permeable. Not only can man in his finiteness be called upon to share for the time in the sacrificial offering both gastronomical and musical delights that correspond to the eternal happiness of the gods, but he can also breach the limits that the mortal condition has imposed on him and behave as a being that is more or less monstrous; this is all the more reason that the protagonists of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are heroes, engaged in a fictional epic action; it is because the status of these men of epic legend that they are able to go beyond the rules of civilization through their superhuman abilities. Like Achilles when he practices human sacrifice to honor the memory of Patroclus or when he treats the body of Hector as a ferocious dog would, the civilized man can be transformed into a savage animal for a certain time.

In addition, the glory of dying after the accomplishment a great deed through this superhuman power can also confer upon the Homeric hero a form of immortality, be it that his *kléos* is kept alive through the bard's repetition of the song, or that, as is the case for Menelaus in the Odyssey, the hero has the fortune not to share the fate of an Achilles or Agamemnon who wander as phantoms in the darkness of Hades, but rather to experience "the easiest life that men can know" (*rhe͟íste͟ bioté͟ anthro͟poisin*; *Odyssey* 4, 565) in the Elysian Fields; even for one who has crossed over the threshold of mortality and who is from then on reanimated by the soft breaths of the zephyr in an eternal springtime, his condition still remains that of an *ánthro͟pos*.[10]

In Homeric poetry, the human is not a given. Not only is he constructed through the narrative action –this is obvious–, but within this discursive and fictional representation as well, the human condition is fulfilled in practices and relationships that are a product of culture. Thus the ensemble of gestures and habits which, from diet to the ways in which men com-

10. On the immortal happiness promised to Menelaus by Proteus, see Homer, *Odyssey* 4, 561-569; the double possibility offered to Homeric heroes between the darkness of Hades and the brightness of the Elysian Fields is the subject of Sourvinou-Inwood's exhaustive analysis (1995: 10-107).

municate among themselves and with the gods, define in Homeric poetry the condition of the civilized human being as a product of these "anthropopoietic" practices; they allow man to develop socially into a being with a culture; for us from a constitutive incompleteness and above all from neural and cerebral capacities that are exceptional but fundamentally plastic, the "anthropopoietic" process of social and cultural construction of the man is indispensable , and that in an "ecopoietic" interaction with an environment which gives to him the means of his survival.

For sure, "anthropopoiesis" and "ecopoiesis" are to be considered as two operational categories that permit the comparison in different cultural communities of the various means that man invents to construct himself with the help of others into a social cultural being in a certain milieu. In the interaction with others and with an environment, the different practices of men in anthropopoietic and ecopoietic interaction constitute an organic and complex identity, one that is collective and symbolic, relying on a series of shared representations. This collective identity corresponds to different customs and representations whose ensemble, simultaneously unstable and permeable to neighboring ensembles, is identified as a culture: a civilization not in the universalizing sense of the term, but rather as the ensemble of representations and practices of a relative nature.[11]

Within the practices of the collective civilized identity of the Greeks in their different polis-communities, poetry represents, in its different narrative forms, and even more so in its different forms centered upon cultic action, one of the preferred means of constructing a collective conception of the human as a being with a culture. Ritualized public recitation as well as rhythmic choral performances to dance and music give to these poetic

11. The concept of "anthropopoiesis" has been developed in the collective research presented by Affergan, Borutti, Calame, Fabietti, Kilani, Remotti, 2003. On the essential distinction between the Enlightenment's idea of a universal civilization and the relative and flexible multiplicity of cultures, see for example the references given by Wieviorka 2005, 18-23. And for the concept of ecopoiesis as a way to understand, at the time of a destructive climate crisis for the men and their environment, see Calame, to be published.

and symbolic figurations of a cultural identity and collective memory an anthropopoietic and ecopoietic effectiveness that is expressed physiologically, aesthetically and intellectually.

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Françoise Létoublon

WOUNDING THE GODS
DIOMEDES' *ARISTEIA* IN *ILIAD* 5 AND HOMER'S ANTHROPOLOGY

… οὔ ποτε φῦλον ὁμοῖον ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν
χαμαί ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων (*Il.* 5. 441-20)

To Jean-Pierre Vernant, whom I did not dare to call "Jipé"

After the clash in book V of the *Iliad* between Diomedes and Aphrodite, Apollo takes charge of preserving Aeneas on the battlefield and asserts in verses 441-2 an irreducible opposition (*οὔ ποτε*) between gods and men –Claude Calame recalled this passage in the previous chapter.

It seems to me possible to bring together the criteria by which the epic traces in this very book, often underestimated, an insurmountable barrier between men and gods, criteria that an anthropological study could adopt as a starting point, to be completed later by some other points taken from other passages:

– Mortality / immortality
– Walking on land / ubiquity of travel and usual sojourn on Olympus
– Food: meat, bread / nectar and ambrosia
– Drink: wine, milk / nectar and ambrosia[1]

Warm thanks to Machi and Menelaos, the faithful editors of the Ithaki conferences, be they actual or online, and to Stephen Rojcewicz who constantly revised my English with a kind accuracy.

1. Actually, neither nectar nor ambrosia are mentioned in *Iliad* 5, but we'll see they are underlying the negative mention of gods' food in verse 341. Besides, it is not easy to know whether *nectar* and *ambrosia* are a food or a drink. A scientifical study by Zanni 2008 concludes to a kind of anointment for both. Let me mention Dumézil 1924, ancient as it is, for his comparative mythological study of the link between the ambrosia and immortality.

These criteria not only situate humans in relation to the gods,[2] but also in relation to animal species,[3] deadly like humans, but which do not have the same constraints of movement and food. In particular, wild animals are cannibal-like monsters (especially the Cyclops Polyphemus)[4] while humans, exceptionally, make anthropophagic wishes (fulfilled in some myths, never in Homer).[5] This anthropological view of humans seems to form the basis of what can be called Homeric humanism.

The intention of this research is, after situating the passage in its context, to show that the whole of this Iliadic book may appear as an applied anthropological theory that seems all the more necessary since the great commentary by Kirk completely missed the point.[6] We'll mainly build on a personal rereading of the *Iliad*, as if in the company of Jean-Pierre Vernant's and his master Louis Gernet's œuvres,[7] completed by some others like Margo Kitts.[8] The French anthropological school is also still flourishing since Vernant founded the "Centre Louis Gernet".[9] And of course, many scholars we'll have to mention investigated Homeric epics in an interesting

2. For a general view of gods in Homer, see Kearns 2004, and the three volumes published as Kernos Supplements (*Les dieux d'Homère. Polythéisme et poésie en Grèce ancienne*, Gabriella Pironti & Corinne Bonnet dir., Liège, 2017, Kernos SuppL 31 ; *Les dieux d'Homère.* II. *Anthropomorphismes*, Renaud Gagné & Miguel Herrero de Jauregui dir., 2019, Kernos SuppL 33 ; *Les dieux d'Homère.* III. *Attributs onomastiques*, Corinne Bonnet & Gabriella Pironti dir., 2021. Kernos SuppL 38)

3. Let us recall that Greek language calls animals with a word *ζώιον, ζῷον* derived from the root meaning 'to live', 'life' and includes human beings among them, see Chantraine 2009 *s.v.* βίος and *ζώω, ζῶ*.

4. See Bakker 2013.

5. *Il.* 22.345-7, Achilles' wish, 24.212-4, Hecuba's wish, and *βεβρώθοις* addressed by Zeus to Hera in 4.35-6, Létoublon 2015, 32-35

6. Kirk 1990 is himself the author of the volume entailing book 5 as well as the editor of the whole Commentary.

7. Mainly Gernet 1968; Vernant 1974; Vernant 1985; Vernant 1989; Vernant 1990; Vernant-Malamoud 1986.

8. Kitts 2017. See also Almagor & Skinner 2013.

9. Apart from the three volumes of *Les dieux d'Homère* mentioned above, see the following collective work: *Anthropologie de l'Antiquité: anciens objets, nouvelles approches,* Pascal Payen & Évelyne Scheid-Tissinier (eds), Turnhout, 2012.

way from our point of view without mentioning anthropology specifically.

A general point seems obvious, but still needs to be explicitly recalled : Homeric gods are anthropomorphic[10] and appear so through the whole of the *Iliad*: they have a body though more shining than mortals, as VERNANT 1986 shows, they talk and have feelings, love and hate like men, and even more so.[11] However, Greek language defines them negatively through the prefix ἀ-, apart from the human characteristic of death: *ἀθάνατοι, ἄμβροτοι* are both ancient negative adjectives formed with **n*- like Latin *immortalis*.[12]

They have a body, and moreover a vulnerable one as we'll see in more detail below, but this body is normally invisible to mortals. They can be seen only if they want to, as Athena will explain to Diomedes, allowing him not only to see herself, but also other gods such as Aphrodite and Ares, and maybe Apollo, through the means of removal of the mist (*ἀχλύς*) from his eyes.[13] This question of visibility vs invisibility comes back to the fore in book 5 with the episode of Hades' helmet of invisibility put on by Athena in order not to be seen by Ares in 845:

> *αὐτὰρ'Αθήνη*
> *δῦν' Ἄϊδος κυνέην, μή μιν ἴδοι ὄβριμος Ἄρης.*
>
> *But Athene*
> *put on the helm of Death, that stark Ares might not discern her.*[14]

10. See particularly VERNANT 1986 and *Les dieux d'Homère*, II *Anthropomorphismes*, RENAUD GAGNÉ & MIGUEL HERRERO DE JAUREGUI (), Liège, 2019, Kernos Suppl. 33.

11. On gods and language, see LÉTOUBLON 1985.

12. VERNANT 1986, 26-7 : « S'ils appartiennent au même univers que les hommes, les dieux forment une race différente : ils sont les *athánatoi*, les non-mortels, les *ámbrotoi*, les non-périssables. Désignation paradoxale puisque, pour les opposer aux humains, elle définit négativement –par une absence, une privation– les êtres dont le corps et la vie possèdent une entière positivité, sans manque ni défaut. Paradoxe instructif dans la mesure où il donne à entendre que, pour penser la vie et le corps divin, les Grecs ont dû, comme référence obligée, partir de ce corps défectueux, de cette vie mortelle dont ils faisaient chaque jour eux-mêmes l'expérience. » See also LORAUX 1986, 352-3.

13. See below 5.127-8 with references.

14. See Kirk's note : "[…] It leads into Athene's unparalleled donning of the cap of Ha-

Both of these passages embody in book 5 the general problem of anthropomorphism, visibility and invisibility of the gods, which we cannot address in the limited frame of this paper otherwise than by referring to scholarship.[15]

1. The wobbly opposition between men and gods in Apollo's discourse

In *Iliad* 5, from the beginning of the book, Athena's favor goes to Diomedes[16] who brilliantly attacks the Trojans Dares and his sons and many others, until Aeneas and Pandaros attack him, the latter being killed and the former saved by Aphrodite, whereas Sthenelos grabs hold of Aeneas' precious horses. Diomedes then confronts Aphrodite[17] and hurts her arm, letting *ichôr* flow instead of blood (v.340). The goddess lets her son fall, but Apollo gathers him up and hides him into a cloud, while Iris drives her out of the mêlée into the Olympus. In this context we encounter Apollo's violent apostrophe addressed to Diomedes:[18]

φράζεο Τυδεΐδη καὶ χάζεο, μηδὲ θεοῖσιν
ἶσ' ἔθελε φρονέειν, ἐπεὶ οὔ ποτε φῦλον ὁμοῖον

des, yet another of the exotic details for which this book is famous. Unlike others, *ikhor* for example, this has little to do with the special theme of wounding gods, and departs from the usual divine means of invisibility, namely covering with cloud or mist. The cap of invisibility, a widely diffuse folktale concept, is enshrined in the Perseus myth (cf. Apollodorus 2.4.2), which is especially rich in folktale motifs and devices; but this is naturally its earliest testimony in a Greek context, followed by *Aspis* 227. Its description here obviously draws on the popular etymology of Hades as ἀ-ϝίδης, the unseen one." Also now Gazis 2018.

15. See mainly Vernant 1986, Loraux 1986, Bettini 2017, Gagné & Herrero de Jauregui 2019, Pironti 2019,

16. On the relation between Athena and Diomedes, see Turkeltaub 2007, who insists on the fact that Diomedes perceives the goddess, whereas "a mist veils mortal eyes that prevents them from distinguishing the divine".

17. Pirenne-Delforge 2004.

18. As Schein 1997 aptly remarks the same Apollo will use words very close to theses against Patrocles in *Il.* 16.707-709: *χάζεο διογενὲς Πατρόκλεες· οὔ νύ τοι αἶσα*
σῷ ὑπὸ δουρὶ πόλιν πέρθαι Τρώων ἀγερώχων,
οὐδ' ὑπ' Ἀχιλλῆος, ὅς περ σέο πολλὸν ἀμείνων.

ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν χαμαὶ ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων. (*Il.* 5. 440-442)

Take care give back, son of Tydeus, and strive no longer
to make yourself like the gods in mind, since never the same is
the breed of gods, who are immortal, and men who walk upon the
earth.'[19]

The god's words underline a total opposition between gods and men, contrasting ἀθανάτων not with *ἄνθρωποι, θνητοί* or *βρότοι* as Homeric language usually does,[20] but with the phrase χαμαὶ ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων, which refers –rather emphatically– to the mode of locomotion rather than mortality,[21] as if the narrator wanted to make fun of Apollo using this phrase. This passage has been striking already for the Ancients since Sappho's fr. 31 seems to echo it in *ἴσος θέοισιν*.[22]

Kirk's note *ad loc* remarks the uniqueness of the expression, with

19. The translations are taken from the Chicago Homer, (Richard Lattimore for the *Iliad*, James Huddleston for the *Odyssey*), sometimes with minimal modifications.

20. This phrase is unique in Homer, but there are two examples of a semantical equivalent in the *Odyssey*, 18.137 *τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστιν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων*, "For such is the mind of men upon the earth", and 22.414 *οὔ τινα γὰρ τίεσκον ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων*, "for they honoured none of the men upon the earth": if we add the examples of *ἕρπω* quoted in the next note, walking on earth is for the Homeric a strong characteristic of mankind. See in modern thinking the importance of *standing up* as a criterium for differentiating monkeys from mankind (for instance Arons 2007). For *χαμαὶ*, see Chantraine 2007, *ad loc*.: it is probably an ancient dative or locative of a feminine no longer existing noun **χαμά*, fixed in an adverbial form, in a parallel process to Lat. *humī* / *humus.* Greek also uses the directive form *χαμᾶζε*. See Purves 2006, 193: "In Homeric language, humans are differentiated from gods as beings who "walk upon the earth" (5.441–42), and, perhaps unsurprisingly, walking is the one activity that gods have a particular difficulty getting quite right. Commentators have often noted the strangeness of Athena and Hera's "shivering-dove" walk across the plain (5.778–79), and, in Book 13, it is the unusual nature of Poseidon's feet and legs as he walks away from men that reveals him to be a god in human form (13.70–72)."

21. *Ἔρχομαι* seems there to be the equivalent of Hom. *ἕρπω*, that is used for designating human beings and animals as "walking on earth" vs. birds flying in the air and fishes swimming in the sea, see *Il.* 17.447 = *Od.* 18.131 *ὅσσα τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνείει τε καὶ ἕρπει*, and *HDem.* 365 *δεσπόσσεις πάντων ὁπόσα ζώει τε καὶ ἕρπει*, see Létoublon 1985, 110-114 and 2015, 24-25. Those passages also show the importance of breathing, not attested in book 5.

22. Engelmayer 2017.

the quasi hapax *χαμαί ἐρχομένων*,[23] "proceeding from sharp deterrence through the rhetorical assonance of *φράζεο … καὶ χάζεο*) to broader prohibition ('don't think on a par with gods') justified by an epigrammatic general rule ('there is no similarity between the races of gods and men')." But he does not comment on the fact that the criteria are not homogeneous, making the opposition somehow wobbly as well as emphatic.

Starting from these non-homogeneous criteria, using the method of contrary, we obtain a first short anthropological grid:

ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν	[mortal humans]
[gods who move freely everywhere]	*χαμαὶ ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων*

[We put the implicit terms between square brackets.]

As suggests the following passage from book 5, the mountain Olympus is the reserved domain of immortal gods,[24] although they also may find themselves on earth and meet with mortals there. But the access to Olympus is absolutely denied to human beings, and Aphrodite may seek shelter there:

360-1 ὄφρ' ἐς Ὄλυμπον ἵκωμαι ἵν' ἀθανάτων ἕδος ἐστί.
λίην ἄχθομαι ἕλκος ὅ με βροτὸς οὔτασεν ἀνὴρ

so I may come to Olympus which is the place of the immortals,
I am in too much pain from the wound of a mortal's spear-stroke.

We actually know at least one mortal who went to Olympus in mythology, Ganymedes, but he was raped by Zeus and made immortal, as it seems, and the solemn way the *Iliad* mentions him in the catalog of Aeneas' ancestors seems to point to an exception.[25] He is also present in the mind of the

23. The adverb occurs 20 times in the *Iliad*, but never else with this verb. Remind that it is etymologically close to the root of Lat. *humus*, *homo*, *humanus*.

24. See later in the same book *Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες* (5.383) and *θεοὺς οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχοντες* (5.404).

25. *Il.* 20.232-235 *Ἴλός τ' Ἀσσάρακός τε καὶ ἀντίθεος Γανυμήδης*,

fighters in book 5 through Tros' horses driven by Aeneas and longed for by Diomedes, who explicitly mentions Ganymedes.[26]

Therefore a straight complementarity appears between the sojourn of the gods on Olympus and the strictly restricted residence on earth for mankind.

2. Mortals vs Immortals in formulas

In order to better understand the originality of verse 441 and its context, it seems necessary to study the "system" of Homeric formulas alluding to the opposition between gods and men and its 'economy', to use Parry's words and concepts.[27] The table shows how Homeric language opposes *θεοί* vs. *ἄνθρωποι, θνητοί* and *βροτοί* vs. *ἀθάνατοι*, with formulas more subtle than we presumed. It might appear astonishing that no scholar attempted to address this question, neither Parry[28] nor his followers, if my inquiry in Google and Google Scholar is reliable.

1. Θεοί / ἄνθρωποι

Il. 1.339	*πρός τε θεῶν μακάρων πρός τε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων*
1.548	*οὔτε θεῶν πρότερος τὸν εἴσεται οὔτ' ἀνθρώπων·*
1.669	*ἐκ Διός, ὅς τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀνάσσει,*

ὅς δὴ κάλλιστος γένετο θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων·
τὸν καὶ ἀνηρείψαντο θεοὶ Διὶ οἰνοχοεύειν
κάλλεος εἵνεκα οἷο ἵν' ἀθανάτοισι μετείη.

Ilos and Assarakos and godlike Ganymedes
who was the loveliest born of the race of martals, and therefore
the gods caught him away to themselves, to be Zeus' wine-pourer.

On Ganymedes, see Strolonga 2018.

26. *Il.* 5.257-267, see particularly 264-7:
τῆς γάρ τοι γενεῆς ἧς Τρωΐ περ εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς δῶχ' υἱος ποινὴν Γανυμήδεος, οὕνεκ' ἄριστοι
ἵππων ὅσσοι ἔασιν ὑπ' ἠῶ τ' ἠέλιόν τε,

27. Parry [1928], 1971.

28. Parry [1928], 1971 paid much attention to the names of gods and heroes, but apparently with no care for their general denomination. See however Garcia 2013, 161-173 on *ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως.*

4.320	*ἀλλ᾽ οὔ πως ἅμα πάντα θεοὶ δόσαν ἀνθρώποισιν·*
8.27	*τόσσον ἐγὼ περί τ᾽ εἰμὶ θεῶν περί τ᾽ εἴμ᾽ ἀνθρώπων*
14.233	*Ὕπνε ἄναξ πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ᾽ ἀνθρώπων,*
18.107	*ὡς ἔρις ἔκ τε θεῶν ἔκ τ᾽ ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλοιτο*
18.404	*ᾔδεεν οὔτε θεῶν οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων,*
20.233 234	*ὃς δὴ κάλλιστος γένετο θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων·*
	τὸν καὶ ἀνηρείψαντο θεοὶ Διὶ οἰνοχοεύειν
24.534 535	*ὣς μὲν καὶ Πηλῆϊ θεοὶ δόσαν ἀγλαὰ δῶρα*
	ἐκ γενετῆς· πάντας γὰρ ἐπ᾽ ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο

2. Θνητοί / ἀθάνατοι

10.306	*χαλεπὸν δέ τ᾽ ὀρύσσειν / ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι· θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται.*
10. 404 405	[*οἳ δ᾽ ἀλεγεινοὶ*] *ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι δαμήμεναι ἠδ᾽ ὀχέεσθαι*
	ἄλλῳ γ᾽ ἢ Ἀχιλῆϊ, τὸν ἀθανάτη τέκε μήτηρ.
10.440 441	*τὰ μὲν οὔ τι καταθνητοῖσιν ἔοικεν / ἄνδρεσσιν φορέειν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν.*
12.242	*ὃς πᾶσι θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἀνάσσει.*
14.199	*δαμνᾷ ἀθανάτους ἠδὲ θνητοὺς ἀνθρώπους.*
16.154	*ὃς καὶ θνητὸς ἐὼν ἕπεθ᾽ ἵπποις ἀθανάτοισι.*
17.77 78	*ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι / τὸν ἀθανάτη τέκε μήτηρ.*
17.440.	*δόμεν Πηλῆϊ ἄνακτι θνητῷ, ὑμεῖς δ᾽ ἐστὸν ἀγήρω τ᾽ ἀθανάτω τε;*
18.86 87	*αἴθ᾽ ὄφελες σὺ μὲν αὖθι μετ᾽ ἀθανάτῃς ἁλίῃσι*
	ναίειν, Πηλεὺς δὲ θνητὴν ἀγαγέσθαι ἄκοιτιν.
1.64	*οἰκία δὲ θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι φανείη*

3. Βροτοί / ἀθάνατοι

5.360-361	*ὄφρ᾽ ἐς Ὄλυμπον ἵκωμαι ἵν᾽ ἀθανάτων ἕδος ἐστί.*
	λίην ἄχθομαι ἕλκος ὅ με βροτὸς οὔτασεν ἀνὴρ
7.446-447	*ἦ ῥά τίς ἐστι βροτῶν ἐπ᾽ ἀπείρονα γαῖαν*
	ὅς τις ἔτ᾽ ἀθανάτοισι νόον καὶ μῆτιν ἐνίψει;
11.2 = 19.2	*ὄρνυθ᾽, ἵν᾽ ἀθανάτοισι φόως φέροι ἠδὲ βροτοῖσι·*
18.85-86	*ἤματι τῷ ὅτε σε βροτοῦ ἀνέρος ἔμβαλον εὐνῇ.*
	αἴθ᾽ ὄφελες σὺ μὲν αὖθι μετ᾽ ἀθανάτῃς ἁλίῃσι
19.22	*οἵ᾽ ἐπιεικὲς / ἔργ᾽ ἔμεν ἀθανάτων, μὴ δὲ βροτὸν ἄνδρα τελέσσαι.*
21.380	*οὐ γὰρ ἔοικεν / ἀθάνατον θεὸν ὧδε βροτῶν ἕνεκα στυφελίζειν.*
24.464	*νεμεσσητὸν δέ κεν εἴη / ἀθάνατον θεὸν ὧδε βροτοὺς ἀγαπαζέμεν ἄντην·*

As this table shows, Homeric Greek uses three different ways for opposing gods to men in formulas, the main characteristic being ‘mortality’ vs. ‘immortality’. Of course, other words in Homeric language may mean ‘im-

mortal', as *ἄφθιτος*, but they do not enter the Homeric schema of opposition between gods and mankind.

Whence may be drawn those key Greek words of oppositions, at least in theory:

ἄνθρωποι [ἄνδρες] / θεοί
θνητοί / ἀθάνατοι
βροτοί / ἄμβροτοι

In the third term, *ἄμβροτοι* does not ever occur as referring to itself as the contrary of βροτοί as we might be waiting for, but it is replaced in this function by ἀθάνατοι, which leads us to look at the seven Homeric uses of the adjective ἄμβροτος:

Il. 5.339: *ῥέε δ' ἄμβροτον αἷμα θεοῖο / ἰχώρ.* ("and blood immortal flowed from the goddess")

Il. 5. 870: *δεῖξεν δ' ἄμβροτον αἷμα καταρρέον ἐξ ὠτειλῆς,* ("and showed him the immortal blood dripping from the spear cut")

Il. 16.380-381 and 867: *τάφρον ὑπέρθορον ὠκέες ἵπποι / ἄμβροτοι*,

Straight across the ditch overleapt those swift and immortal / horses

Il. 20.358: *οὐδέ κ' Ἄρης, ὅς περ θεὸς ἄμβροτος, οὐδέ κ' Ἀθήνη* ("Not Ares, who is a god immortal, not even Athene")

Il. 22.9 *διώκεις / αὐτὸς θνητὸς ἐὼν θεὸν ἄμβροτον*; ("why do you] pursue me / being mortal, while I am an immortal god? ")

Il. 24.460 *ὦ γέρον ἦτοι ἐγὼ θεὸς ἄμβροτος εἰλήλουθα / Ἑρμείας·* ("Aged sir, I who came to you am a god immortal, Hermes").

The adjective *ἄμβροτος* qualifies a material object of the divine world, either a singular god as in the three latest examples, or in the plural, it may qualify immortal horses. But it never replaces *ἀθάνατοι* or *θεοί*, and we cannot invoke any reason for this dissymmetry. Since there are *θεὸς ἄμβροτος, θεὸν ἄμβροτον* and *ἵπποι ἄμβροτοι*, why not * [*θεοὶ*] *ἄμβροτοι*?

The table also shows some interesting idiomatic phrases:

in the nominative, θεοὶ has a strong agentive role,[29] see *θεοὶ δόσαν* + dative (*Il.* 4.320, 24.534), *θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται* (10.306), *τὸν καὶ ἀνηρείψαντο θεοὶ Διὶ οἰνοχοεύειν* (20.234).

Θνητός is frequently used with a concessive value : see

16.154 *ὅς καὶ θνητὸς ἐὼν ἕπεθ' ἵπποις ἀθανάτοισι.* ("He, mortal as he was, ran besides the immortal horses")

17.77-78 *ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι / τὸν ἀθανάτη τέκε μήτηρ.* ("they are difficult horses] *for mortal man* [to manage, or even to ride behind them")

For all except Achilleus, who was born of an immortal mother.

17.444. *δόμεν Πηλῆϊ ἄνακτι / θνητῷ, ὑμεῖς δ' ἐστὸν ἀγήρω τ' ἀθανάτω τε*; (" Poor wretches,] why then did we ever give you to the lord Peleus,/ a mortal man, and you yourselves are immortal and ageless")[30]

18.86 87 *αἴθ' ὄφελες σὺ μὲν αὖθι μετ' ἀθανάτῃς ἁλίῃσι*
ναίειν, Πηλεὺς δὲ θνητὴν ἀγαγέσθαι ἄκοιτιν. ("I wish you had gone on living then with the other goddesses / of the sea, and that Peleus had married some mortal woman").

Thus the whole corpus points to the inferiority of mankind as a general undisputable truth, though not asserted through a mythical narrative like Hesiod does by telling the Prometheus myth both in the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*.[31]

This criterion is applied to horses as well as gods:

16,154 *καὶ θνητὸς ἐὼν ἕπεθ'ἵπποις ἀθανάτοισι* ("He, mortal as he was, ran beside the immortal horses").

Cp. in our corpus 5.*777 τοῖσιν δ' ἀμβροσίην Σιμόεις ἀνέτειλε νέμεσθαι.*
and Simoeis grew as grass ambrosia as grass for them to graze on.

29. On agency in Greek, see Luraghi 2014.
30. See Garcia 2013, 162.
31. Stoddard 2004, 98.

Immortal horses receive their special food, with the name *ἀμβροσίην* formed on the same root as **n-mrto-* > *ἄμβροτο-*.[32]

Whence we draw those key Greek words of oppositions:

θνητοί / ἀθάνατοι
βροτοί / ἄμβροτοι
ἄνθρωποι [ἄνδρες] / θεοί

Let us note that Homer seems not only to reverse the habitual order but to combine each word of the left column with each one of the right, which leads to a large choice making the versification easier. One of the terms may be implicit, as if immortality goes without saying when gods are opposed to men,[33] as well as mortality for men when they are opposed to gods.[34]

The total irreducibility of men and gods claimed by Apollo in book 5 makes of course all the more brilliant the obstinacy of Diomedes in fighting against the gods who favor Troy: Aphrodite, Apollo and Ares.[35] Whence Diomedes appears as a 'second Achilles'.[36]

Hence the link with the following point: both gods and men are vulnerable, but the wounds may be lethal for men alone.

32. The use of *νέμεσθαι* with *ἀμβροσίην* suggests that the horses eat *ambrosia*, whereas *nectar* is rather *poured from a crater* in formulas (*Il.* 1.598, 4.3), since this verb meaning at the origin 'part' has a lot of uses in pastoralism, see Chantraine 2009 *s.v.*: "Dans cette famille qui a fourni des emplois très divers, il faut partir pour *νέμω* du sens de 'faire une attribution régulière de'; il en résulte des emplois très généraux: 'habiter, nourrir, manger, dévorer, diriger', etc., avec également des tours particuliers aussi différents que 'faire paître, reconnaître comme vrai', etc."

33. *βρότοισι θεῶν* 9.150
οὔτε βροτοῖσιν οὔτε θεοῖς 15.95-6

34. *ἄνδρες Βατίειαν κικλήσκουσιν ἀθάνατοι δε τε σῆμα* …2.813-4
Μερόπεσσι βρότοισιν 2.285
ἀθανάτοισι … ἠδὲ βρότοισι
πρὸς τε θεῶν μακάρων πρός τε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων 1.339
18,404 *οὔτε θεῶν οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων*

35. On Diomedes' aristeia, see Bernardete 1968, Schein 1997, Pratt 2009, Dova 2020.

36. Pratt 2009, 143.

2. Diomedes' aristeia: The gods may be wounded, but not all of them

2.1. Aphrodite

Book 5 shows twice in the narrative that wounds may be inflicted on gods, as in the main exploits in Diomedes' aristeia:[37] His protector deity Athena listens to his prayer, reveals to him that he will be able to distinguish the gods from men,[38] and gives him the advice to attack among the gods only Aphrodite,[39] and later Ares.[40] After the first advice, the aristeia begins with a series of victories over Trojan fighters, from 5.144 to 325. He kills Pandaros (293-6) and wounds Aeneas (305-310), whom his mother Aphrodite rescues.[41] Diomedes pursues her, knowing her to be without warcraft (5.331 *γινώσκων ὅτ' ἄναλκις ἔην θεός*). She is called Kypris in verse 330, exceptionally for the *Iliad*.[42] The relevant passage narrating the attack and wounding is 5.334-342:

37. On the vulnerability of gods, see Andersen 1981, Vernant 1986, Neal 2006 a and b, Turkeltaub 2007, Holmes 2007, Mc Coy 2013, Garcia 2013, Stamatopoulou 2017. Loraux 1986, 344 quotes Clemens of Alexandria' address to this passage in his *Protrepticus*: "Vos dieux amoureux et passionnés sont de toute manière soumis à la condition humaine. 'C'est qu'ils ont bien une chair mortelle.'"

38. *ἀχλὺν δ' αὖ τοι ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἕλον ἣ πρὶν ἐπῆεν,*
ὄφρ' εὖ γιγνώσκῃς ἠμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα. (*Il.* 5.127-8)

(I have taken the mist from your eyes, that before now
was there, so that you may well recognize the god and the mortal).

On *ἀχλύς*, see apart Chantraine *ad loc.* Vernant 1986, 38-9, Bettini 2017, 38-41.

39. *… ἀτὰρ εἴ κε Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἀφροδίτη*
ἔλθῃσ' ἐς πόλεμον, τήν γ' οὐτάμεν ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ. (*Il.* 5.131-2)

(…but only if Aphrodite, Zeus' daughter,
Comes to the fighting, her at least you may stab with the sharp bronze).

Diomedes repeats this advice to Athena when he is afraid because he sees Ares being "lord of the fighting" (5.724 *μάχην ἀνὰ κοιρανέοντα*), which appears a strong narrative thread in the book.

40. *Il.* 5.827-831.

41. Marks 2010.

42. Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 311-2 suggests that it might be ironic from the poet, see also Pironti 2005. Cassio 2012 remarks the originality of this book 5 quoting Lorimer 1950, and lists p. 418 among 8 points that are specific of this book the followings:

ἀλλ' ὅτε δή ῥ' ἐκίχανε πολὺν καθ' ὅμιλον ὀπάζων,
ἔνθ' ἐπορεξάμενος μεγαθύμου Τυδέος υἱὸς
ἄκρην οὔτασε χεῖρα μετάλμενος ὀξέϊ δουρὶ
ἀβληχρήν· εἶθαρ δὲ δόρυ χροὸς ἀντετόρησεν
ἀμβροσίου διὰ πέπλου, ὅν οἱ Χάριτες κάμον αὐταί,
πρυμνὸν ὕπερ θέναρος· ῥέε δ' ἄμβροτον αἷμα θεοῖο
ἰχώρ, οἷός πέρ τε ῥέει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν·
οὐ γὰρ σῖτον ἔδουσ', οὐ πίνουσ' αἴθοπα οἶνον,
τοὔνεκ' ἀναίμονές εἰσι καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται.

Now as, following her through the thick crowd, he caught her,
lunging in his charge far forward the son of high-hearted
Tydeus made a thrust against the soft hand with the bronze spear,
and the spear tore the skin driven clean on through the immortal
robe that the very Graces had woven for her carefully,
over the palm's base; and blood immortal flowed from the goddess,
ichor, that which runs in the veins of the blessed divinities;
since these eat no food, nor do they drink of the shining
wine, and therefore they have no blood and are called immortal.

Her hand is delicate (*ἀβληχρήν*, emphasized through the rhythm) and may be wounded, so that blood flows, but the poet immediately corrects with the striking formula ἄμβροτον αἷμα that we'll find again for Ares. It looks like an oxymoron, and draws a correction in the text: it is not blood, but ἰχώρ, and the hapax name is followed by its very definition: "which flows for blessed gods", and a somehow pleonastic explanation: "they have no blood (*ἀναίμονές εἰσι*) and are called immortal (*ἀθάνατοι καλέονται*).[43] In

1) A mortal, Diomedes, wounds a goddess, Aphrodite;
2) *ἰχώρ*, the special blood of the gods is mentioned twice (340 and 416);
3) Aphrodite is called Κύπρις;
4) Dione appears as Aphrodite's mother;

43. Leaf judges 240-2 «a very poor interpolation», but Kirk devotes a note to them that is more theological or anthropological. On *ikhôr* and the strange expression of 5.339-342, see Jouanna-Demont 1981, Vernant 1986, 27, Loraux 1986, 350-351, Garcia 2013,

between, as if the poet could not refrain from doing an anthropological presentation, verse 341 remarks the essential difference in food and drink in a very rhetorical manner (with a chiasm: *(οὐ) σῖτον ἔδουσ' / (οὐ) πίνουσ' αἴθοπα οἶνον)*.[44]

2.2. Apollo

Aphrodite is for Diomedes an almost easy prey with her "soft hand" (*ἄκρην … χεῖρα*). After her flight supported by Iris and Ares' horses, Diomedes pursues Aeneas, although conscious that Aphrodite's son is now under Apollo's protection. Then comes the real difficulty and eventual failure for the Achaean hero, at his fourth try at assault:

> 5.434-439 *ἀλλ' ὅ γ' ἄρ' οὐδὲ θεὸν μέγαν ἄζετο, ἵετο δ' αἰεὶ*
> *Αἰνείαν κτεῖναι καὶ ἀπὸ κλυτὰ τεύχεα δῦσαι.*
> *τρὶς μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπόρουσε κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων,*
> *τρὶς δέ οἱ ἐστυφέλιξε φαεινὴν ἀσπίδ' Ἀπόλλων·*
> *ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἶσος,*
> *δεινὰ δ' ὁμοκλήσας προσέφη ἑκάεργος Ἀπόλλων·*
>
> *he did not shrink even from the great god, but forever forward*
> *drove, to kill Aeneas and strip his glorious armour.*
> *Three time, furious to cut him down, he drove forward,*
> *And three times Apollo battered aside the bright shield,*
> *But as a fourth time, like more than man, he charged, Apollo*
> *Who strikes from afar cried out to him in the voice of terror.*

This quadruple attempt,[45] more or less in the middle of the book, may have a tragic resonance, as a failure. but for me it makes Diomedes' aristeia

177-8. I regret I could not see L.S. di Campobianco, "ἰχώρ: the 'blood' of the Homeric gods. Notes on Eustathius' Commentary to *Iliad* V, v.339-340", *Rivista storica dell'antichità* 2020.

44. Vernant and his team actually studied the Greek anthropology of eating (Detienne-Vernant 1979) but centered on meat and sacrifice. For me, *Il.* 5.341 reveals the very deep implicit thought that mankind entirely depends on bread and wine.

45. Forte 2021, 63 has an interesting discussion on this type of repetition: let me quote

still greater, since he goes to the furthest end of human condition.[46] Diomedes' repetitive gesture, already in book 5, expresses and *embodies* "indeterminacy and stasis" or "indefiniteness and resolution", as says Alexander Forte without quoting this very passage. Kirk's commentary however duly remarks that this type of formulaic repetition occurs three other times in the *Iliad*: in the Patrocleia twice, and in Achilles' aristeia once.[47] If Diomedes' aristeia is only the first step in the Iliadic chain that links together Diomedes, Patrocles and Achilles, we may understand Diomedes' failure facing Apollo as an anticipation of Patrocles' failure facing Hector and behind him the same Apollo, whereas Achilles' impulse against Hector – al-

his conclusion in some detail: "[…] the structuring device of triple and quadruple repetition would have been a poetic mnemo-technique, but it also would have served as a marker for an audience, queuing expectations that the poet could validate and frustrate. The triple repetition of Achilles' chase of Hector around the walls, for example, could have created a tension or expectation, wherein an audience simultaneously aware of Hector's inevitable death, and of the triple repetition as a marker of indeterminacy and stasis, would have anticipated a dramatic resolution, eventually effected through the divine interventions of Zeus and Athena. The audience might therefore have been aware of the deferral and postponement of lamentation's end over the last two books, but the manifestation of this delay in the *Iliad* serves as a glimpse into a technic of poetic memory, in which a repeated action occurs three times, then a fourth, after which the repetition is resolved. The Homeric poems employ these triple and quadruple repetitions to express complex notions of indefiniteness and resolution, yet these complexities are understandable as developments of cognitive and phenomenological processes that are intrinsic to embodied, and fundamentally repetitive, human experience."

46. *Pace* PRATT 2009, 155: "Diomedes' encounters with Ares and Aphrodite, however, are more comic than cosmic.", and 156: "In contrast to Achilles, Diomedes, the fatherless son, the sonless hero, is entirely without significant attachments that allow him the *Iliad's* fundamental tragic insight." See LORAUX quoted below in my conclusion.

47. *τρὶς μὲν ἐπ' ἀγκῶνος βῆ τείχεος ὑψηλοῖο*
Πάτροκλος, τρὶς δ' αὐτὸν ἀπεστυφέλιξεν Ἀπόλλων
[…]
ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἶσος,
16.784-786 *τρὶς μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπόρουσε θοῷ ἀτάλαντος Ἄρηϊ*
[…] ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἶσος, (Patrocleia: 16.702-706)
Achilles against Hector:
τρὶς μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπόρουσε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
ἔγχεϊ χαλκείῳ, τρὶς δ' ἠέρα τύψε βαθεῖαν.
ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἶσος, (20.445-447)

though himself protected by the same god– will be victorious.[48]

Anyway, this is the context in which Apollo's violent rebuke intervenes. Diomedes obeys the god's order, as shows the echo between the imperative χάζεο he utters in verse 440 and the first action verb of which Diomedes is the subject in 443:

Τυδεΐδης δ' ἀνεχάζετο τυτθὸν ὀπίσσω

and Tydeus' son gave backward, only a little.

This retreat in the face of Apollo does not constitute a defeat, I mean, but it rather stresses the limits of human condition, be it a hero, and we shall take this in account in our conclusion.

2.3. Ares' 'Near Death Experience'

Apollo then launches Ares[49] to attack Diomedes as revenge for Aphrodite's injury, and Ares' outburst, almost from 563 to 595, is awful, provoking even Diomedes' fear,[50] seen through a beautiful contemplative simile at 597-600.[51] Which leads to a second retreat of the hero (*ἀνεχάζετο*, 5.600), with an increasing dramatic suspense until this point, to my mind. The

48. I shall develop elsewhere this idea of linking the *Iliad* as a whole composition.

49. On Ares see Loraux 1986, who aptly insists on the frequency of the adjective κρατερός.

50. *Τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ῥίγησε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης·*

Diomedes of the great war cry shivered as he saw him,

On *ῥίγησε* as a symptom of fear, see Zaborowski 2002, 182-6. The verb is linked to the name *ῥίγος* 'cold', cf. Lat. *frīgus*.

51. *ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀνὴρ ἀπάλαμνος ἰὼν πολέος πεδίοιο*
στήῃ ἐπ' ὠκυρόῳ ποταμῷ ἅλα δὲ προρέοντι
ἀφρῷ μορμύροντα ἰδών, ἀνά τ' ἔδραμ' ὀπίσσω,
ὣς τότε Τυδεΐδης ἀνεχάζετο,

And like a man in his helplessness who, crossing a great plain,
Stands at the edge of a fast-running river that dashes seaward,
and watches it thundering into white water, and leaps a pace backward,
so now Tydeus' son gave back, …

Scott 2009, ch.4 notes : "Similes organize Diomedes' aristeia in *Iliad* 5."

narrative leaves then Diomedes for some other fights, less interesting for our point of view, though they put on stage important characters such as Sarpedon and Tlepolemos. The focus comes back to Hector, still accompanied by Ares (699-703), with an *androktasia* (705-710), which determines Athena and Hera to find a way to stop Ares, with Zeus' permission. Diomedes comes again to the center at 781, in the middle of his warriors, compared to raw-meat eating lions.[52] Hera encourages the Argive fighters with her Stentor-like voice,[53] while Athena 'rushes' (*ἐπόρουσε*)[54] to Diomedes, whom she finds healing the painful wound made earlier by Pandaros. The goddess exhorts him to fight recalling with some length (800-813) his father Tydeus' exploits,[55] even though it might appear tactless since Diomedes, having very few memories of his father may be called "fatherless".[56] Diomedes politely answers that he well recognized her (815), but also remembers that he cannot attack gods other than Aphrodite, with a word to for word quotation of her former advice (819-821). His response ends with recognizing Ares as the master on the battlefield :

52. The comparison begins as a short one, but is developed in a second verse:
εἰλόμενοι λείουσιν ἐοικότες ὠμοφάγοισιν
ἢ συσὶ κάπροισιν, τῶν τε σθένος οὐκ ἀλαπαδνόν, (782-3)
in the likeness of lions who rend their meat raw
or wild pigs, boars, in whom the strength diminishes never.
See Létoublon 2016.

53. The allusion to Stentor's voice is among the peculiarities of book 5, see above the reference to Cassio 2012.

54. Kirk *ad loc.* remarks the "untraditional application" of this verb.

55. With an astonishing diminutive tone, she begins and ends with restrictions against Diomedes:
ἦ ὀλίγον οἱ παῖδα ἐοικότα γείνατο Τυδεύς. (800)
Tydeus got him a son who is little enough lile him […]
οὐ σύ γ' ἔπειτα (812-3)
Τυδέος ἔκγονός ἐσσι δαΐφρονος Οἰνεΐδαο.
If so,
You are not issue then of the son of wise Oineus, Tydeus."

56. Pratt 2009.

γιγνώσκω γὰρ Ἄρηα μάχην ἀνὰ κοιρανέοντα. (824)

Since I see that this who is lord of the fighting is Ares.

Athena then reaffirms her protection to Diomedes and clearly orders him to attack Ares (829-34), whom she indirectly insults as:

τοῦτον μαινόμενον, τυκτὸν κακόν, ἀλλοπρόσαλλον (831)

that thing of fury, evil-wrought, that double-faced liar[57]

and accuses to have switched sides.[58]

The goddess takes Sthenelos' place on the chariot and drives it towards Ares who is stripping Periphas whom he has killed (842-3). Qualified successively with three diverse negative epithets, *μιαιφόνος* 'blood-stained' (844), *ὄβριμος* (845) and *βροτολοιγὸς* 'man-slaughtering' (846), Ares leaves then his prey and faces Diomedes, without seeing Athena who put on the helm of Hades (845).[59]

The fight itself is quickly told, from 850 to 858:

οἳ δ' ὅτε δὴ σχεδὸν ἦσαν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰόντες,
πρόσθεν Ἄρης ὠρέξαθ' ὑπὲρ ζυγὸν ἠνία θ' ἵππων
ἔγχεϊ χαλκείῳ μεμαὼς ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἑλέσθαι·

57. Kirk comments: "Now he is to go straight for Ares, whom she abuses in an elegant and highly subordinated sentence." See Loraux 1986, 347-8: "Arès se trouve toujours des deux côtés, quel que soit le camp où vont ses préférences personnelles. Une telle attitude lui vaut d'être désigné comme *alloprósallos* –celui qui va d'un camp à l'autre– et, s'ils n'étaient pas animés contre le dieu d'une totale partialité, Athéna et Zeus, […] devraient reconnaître qu'il s'agit là moins d'un jugement que d'une définition exacte : l'énoncé même de la loi de la guerre, qu'Arès incarne. Aussi, lorsque s'affrontent les guerriers, ces serviteurs d'Arès, c'est à chaque fois le dieu qu'ils opposent à lui-même."

58. In a kind of mythological allusion that Mabel Lang calls "reverberation", see below. It might be justified by the direct insult he receives from Apollo, though theoretically on the same Trojan side, in 5.455

Ἄρες Ἄρες βροτολοιγὲ μιαιφόνε τειχεσιπλῆτα

"Ares, Ares, manslaughtering, blood-stained, stormer of walls".

59. Once again an allusion specific of this book, met nowhere else in Homer, see Kirk's note among others.

καὶ τό γε χειρὶ λαβοῦσα θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
ὦσεν ὑπὲκ δίφροιο ἐτώσιον ἀϊχθῆναι.
δεύτερος αὖθ' ὡρμᾶτο βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης
ἔγχεϊ χαλκείῳ· ἐπέρεισε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα ὅθι ζωννύσκετο μίτρῃ·
τῇ ῥά μιν οὗτα τυχών, διὰ δὲ χρόα καλὸν ἔδαψεν,

Now as they in their advance had come close together,
Ares lunged first over the yoke and the reins of his horses
with the bronze spear, furious to take the life from him.
But the goddess grey-eyed Athene in her hand catching
The spear pushed it away from the car, so he missed and stabbed vainly.
After him Diomedes of the great war cry drove forward
With the bronze spear; and Pallas Athene, leaning in on it,
Drove it into the depth of the belly where the war belt girt him.
Picking this place he stabbed and driving it deep in the fair flesh,

Having wounded Ares, Diomedes "wrenched the spear out again", and Ares shrieked (*ἔβραχε*), "a verb implying a loud, harsh sound as of the axle creaking at 838".[60]

τῇ ῥά μιν οὗτα τυχών, διὰ δὲ χρόα καλὸν ἔδαψεν,
πὰρ δὲ Διὶ Κρονίωνι καθέζετο θυμὸν ἀχεύων, […]
δεῖξεν δ' ἄμβροτον αἷμα καταρρέον ἐξ ὠτειλῆς, (5.858)

Picking this <u>place</u> she stabbed and driving it <u>deep</u> in the <u>fair flesh</u>
wrenched the <u>spear</u> out again. Then Ares the <u>brazen</u> bellowed […]
and showed him the <u>immortal</u> <u>blood</u> dripping from the <u>spear</u> <u>cut</u>.

In both cases, gods' wounds are painful as said 1) for Aphrodite in v.354 *ἀχθομένην ὀδύνῃσι,* "[her skin] wounded and suffering", and 361 *λίην ἄχθομαι ἔλκος ὅ με βροτὸς οὔτασεν* ἀνὴρ ("I am in <u>too much</u> <u>pain</u> from the wound of a mortal's spear-stroke,").

60. KIRK *ad loc.*

2) for Ares v. 871 *ὀλοφυρόμενος* "in sorrow", and 873 *ῥίγιστα θεοὶ τετληότες εἰμέν* "we who are gods have to endure the most horrible hurts".

They complain like humans, or rather like human children: (Aphrodite near her mother Dione,[61] v.376-380; Ares beside Zeus, 872-887*)*.[62]

But they don't die: 402 = 901 *οὐ μὲν γάρ τι καταθνητός γ' ἐτέτυκτο* ("since he was not made to be one of the mortals")**.**[63]

To justify my subtitle alluding to modern so-called NDE, we see later that Ares 'almost died' in a splendid counterfactual,[64] –actually in another

61. Dione's character appears only in this passage in Homer, see Kirk *ad loc.*: "This character is « unique in the heroic epos. […] Homer evidently wished to gloss over the savage old tale of her birth in the sea from Ouranos'genitals (cf. Hesiod, *Theog.* 188 ff.*)*." Aphrodite as daughter of Zeus and Dione appears in sharp contrast with Hesiod's version of her birth from Ouranos' genitals. This contrast is perhaps reflected by Plato's distinction between Aphrodite Ourania and Aphrodite Pandemos in *Symposium* 180d-e, see Ballesteros 2021. Aphrodite's process to her mother in Olympus appears a unique parallel to a passage of *Gilgamesh* that led Burkert and others to think of an influence of the latter on Homeric epic (Burkert 1975, Ballesteros 2021 among others). Apart from this parallel, the linguistic proximity between the names *Zeus* and *Dione* warrants the Indo-European origin of the divine couple.

62. Ares complains more about Athena than about Diomedes. Anyhow he does not please Zeus who rejects him as unbearable.

63. I found no comment on this verb that seems to assimilate gods to fabricated objects.

64. For Kirk a 'theological absurdity', but see Louden 1993. It concerns the mythological exemplum in Dione's discourse rather than our passage: for Ares the actual fight against Diomedes recalls Otos and Ephialtes' still more dangerous attack in the mythological past: these Aloadai were gigantic twin sons, born from Iphimedeia to Poseidon, who threatened to pile Mt Ossa on Olympos and Pelion on Ossa, see Kirk *ad loc.* "The tale as it appears here may be too bizarre to be a plausible Homeric invention as Willcock suggests *ad loc.*; yet other versions did not survive, judging at least by the lack of other hard information in the mythographical tradition." See Lang 1983 (not quoted by Kirk) and her interesting theory of reverberation. Loraux 1986, 352-3 notes that this line repeats 5.311 which concerns Aeneas: "Il y a d'abord, dans la harangue de Dionè, à propos du dieu enfermé dans la jarre, la répétition d'une formule déjà employée au sujet d'un mortel: "et il eût bel et bien péri sur place » ne se dit d'Arès qu'après s'être dit d'Énée, quelque soixante-dix vers auparavant ; or, pour être né d'une déesse, Énée n'en appartient pas moins à une lignée humaine, et seule l'intervention de sa mère Aphrodite l'a sauvé d'un trépas certain : la superposition parle de soi. De même, lorsque Arès guérit de la blessure que lui a infligée la lance de Diomède, le texte répétera à son sujet la formule que, dans son récit, Dioné avait appliquée à Hadès. […] La première répétition assimilait Arès à un mortel, la seconde l'associe à l'immortel souver-

episode of the same book, told among Dione's exempla, v.388

καί νύ κεν ἔνθ' ἀπόλοιτο ῎Αρης ἆτος πολέμοιο, ("and now might Ares, insatiable of fighting, have perished"),[65] which leads us to analyze more closely the series of those exempla and their paradigmatic role.[66]

3. Dione's exempla of gods wounded by men

Fleeing from the battlefield to Olympus on Ares' chariot with the aid of Iris, Aphrodite goes straight to her mother Dione,[67] in a "moving scene, which is also gently humorous, where the wounded goddess falls into her mother's lap (like a child as bT remark)."[68] Dione's question also addresses a child (φίλον τέκος), with the same tone and words Zeus uses with Artemis in comparable conditions.[69] Aphrodite's reply (376-380) "combines indignation, pathos and cunning."[70] Dione's long (382-404) consolation speech is a purple passage of rhetoric, beginning with the idiomatic perfect imperative τέτλαθι[71] reduplicated by the quasi synonym *ἀνάσχεο*, and echoed by four instances of the aorist τλη-, first person plural *τλῆμεν* in 383, third person singular τλῆ in 385 for Ares, 392 for Hera, 395 for Hades (noted in bold letters):

ain des morts : le recours à la répétition est décidément tout sauf une procédure gratuite, puisqu'il contribue à enraciner le dieu dans son statut paradoxal. Mais le même résultat est aussi bien obtenu par la pratique inverse, celle de l'*hapax* : lorsque Arès s'imagine rétrospectivement *amenēnós* sous les coups de Diomède, comment entendre ce mot que l'*Iliade* n'emploie aucune autre fois ?"

65. Andersen 1981, Purves 2006, Beck 2018. Loraux 1986, 342 nicely calls the passage « une enclave d'irréel dans l'économie iliadique de la mort. »

66. See the seminal article by Willcock 1964.

67. Etymologically the feminine of **dyeus*, Dione is probably a very archaic deity, see above n. 61.

68. Kirk *ad* 370-2.

69. *Il.* 21.509, see Kirk *ad* 373-4.

70. Kirk *ad loc.*

71. See *Il.* 1.556 (Achilles to his mother: *τέτλαθι μῆτερ ἐμή, καὶ ἀνάσχεο κηδομένη περ* is strictly identical with 5.382); *Od.* 20.18 (Odysseus to his own heart: *τέτλαθι δή, κραδίη, καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης*).

πολλοὶ γὰρ δὴ ***τλῆμεν*** *Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες*
ἐξ ἀνδρῶν χαλέπ' ἄλγε' ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι τιθέντες.
τλῆ μὲν Ἄρης *ὅτε μιν Ὦτος κρατερός τ' Ἐφιάλτης*
παῖδες Ἀλωῆος, δῆσαν κρατερῷ ἐνὶ δεσμῷ·
χαλκέῳ δ' ἐν κεράμῳ δέδετο τρισκαίδεκα μῆνας·
καί νύ κεν ἔνθ' ἀπόλοιτο Ἄρης ἄτος πολέμοιο,
εἰ μὴ μητρυιὴ περικαλλὴς Ἠερίβοια
Ἑρμέᾳ ἐξήγγειλεν· ὃ δ' ἐξέκλεψεν Ἄρηα
ἤδη τειρόμενον, χαλεπὸς δέ ἑ δεσμὸς ἐδάμνα.
τλῆ δ' Ἥρη, *ὅτε μιν κρατερὸς πάϊς Ἀμφιτρύωνος*
δεξιτερὸν κατὰ μαζὸν ὀϊστῷ τριγλώχινι
βεβλήκει· τότε καί μιν ἀνήκεστον λάβεν ἄλγος.
τλῆ δ' Ἀΐδης ἐν τοῖσι πελώριος ὠκὺν ὀϊστόν,
εὖτέ μιν ὠὐτὸς ἀνὴρ υἱὸς Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
ἐν Πύλῳ ἐν νεκύεσσι βαλὼν ὀδύνῃσιν ἔδωκεν·
αὐτὰρ ὃ βῆ πρὸς δῶμα Διὸς καὶ μακρὸν Ὄλυμπον
κῆρ ἀχέων ὀδύνῃσι πεπαρμένος· αὐτὰρ ὀϊστὸς
ὤμῳ ἔνι στιβαρῷ ἠλήλατο, κῆδε δὲ θυμόν.
τῷ δ' ἐπὶ Παιήων ὀδυνήφατα φάρμακα πάσσων
ἠκέσατ'· οὐ μὲν γάρ τι καταθνητός γε τέτυκτο.
σχέτλιος ὀβριμοεργὸς ὃς οὐκ ὄθετ' αἴσυλα ῥέζων,
ὃς τόξοισιν ἔκηδε θεοὺς οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι. (Il. 5.383-404)

For many of us who have our homes on Olympus endure things
from men, when ourselves we inflict hard pain on each other.
Ares had to endure it when strong Ephialtes and Otos,
sons of Aloeus, chained him in bonds that were too strong for him,
and three months and ten he lay chained in the brazen cauldron;
and now might Ares, insatiable of fighting, have perished,
had not Eëriboia, their stepmother, the surpassingly lovely,
brought word to Hermes, who stole Ares away out of it
as he was growing faint and the hard bondage was breaking him.
Hera had to endure it when the strong son of Amphitryon

struck her beside the right breast with a tri-barbed arrow,
so that the pain he gave her could not be quieted. Hades
the gigantic had to endure with the rest the flying arrow
struck him among the dead men at Pylos, and gave him to agony;
but he went up to the house of Zeus and to tall Olympus
heavy at heart, stabbed through and through with pain, for the arrow
was driven into his heavy shoulder, and his spirit was suffering.
But Paiëon, scattering medicines that still pain,
healed him, since he was not made to be one of the mortals.
Brute, heavy-handed, who thought nothing of the bad he was doing,
who with his archery hurt the gods that dwell on Olympus!

The rhetoric assonance *τλῆμεν, τλῆ μὲν … τλῆ δ'…* strongly emphasizes first the collective implication of gods in suffering because of men, and then the three individual exempla of Ares, Hera and Hades.[72] It seems astonishing that Kirk does not give any parallel for the catalogue of wounded gods taken as paradigmatic exempla, and does not quote any scholarship but himself, whereas we know at least two studies of this striking passage integrating it into parallels that both precede 1990, moreover both in English, Willcock 1964 and Lang 1983. It seems impossible to proceed in our analysis of Homeric anthropology without them, without excluding some other publications of course.[73] The main feature is that a mythological event of the past may value in a present situation as a pattern for an action, as does Achilles' narrating Niobe's disaster –the killing of her children by Apollo and Artemis as a revenge for their mother Leto– as an argument for leading Priam to eat in *Iliad* 24, which seems absurd since in

72. This use of rhetoric must be stressed as a recurring feature of mythological exempla in Homer: they aim to persuade and therefore they sometimes 'invent' *ad hoc* details, as Willcock 1964 and 1977 shows. See also Demoen 1997.

73. See Willcock's definition (1964, 42): 'a myth introduced for exhortation or consolation' and Andersen's one: 'the paradigmatic use of myth entails the application of mythical precedent to illustrate, understand or affect a situation; in the last case the paradigm may be used for exhortation or dissuasion.' Both quoted by Maravela 2014, 15.

the myth Niobe wept so much that she eventually endured petrification, as the Ovidian version shows.

In order not to take too much space, I will go straight to the mythological paradigm that I deem the closest to Dione's one, though not in Homer proper but in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite,* where Aphrodite herself mentions the three goddesses whom she could never turn to love (Athena, Artemis and Hestia), echoed by the story of the goddess who fell in love with a man –like she did herself with Anchises– and suffered because of his aging (like Eos with Tithonos) or death.[74] Those exempla aim to show that the female is always inferior to the male in a patriarchal world, even though she is a god, as Maravela concludes in her study of the 'tongue-tied' goddess:

When examined in the light of the poetics and 'rhetorics' of the Homeric paradeigmata, Aphrodite's mythological examples offer glimpses into the cognition of the humiliated and tongue-tied goddess in the wake of her affair with the mortal Anchises.[75]

Those mythological paradigms generally appear to be used as arguments in the rhetoric of discourse. More particularly in the case of Dione's exempla of gods enduring injuries, Mabel Lang demonstrates in a thorough study of Homeric mythological paradigmatic exempla as cases of 'reverberation', that they are linked throughout the *Iliad* as a "complex whole"[76] by allusions to more ancient stories than the *Iliad* and by the great themes of *Binding* vs. *Loosing* and *Hurling from Heaven*.[77] Among Dione's exempla, "the comparatively unmotivated wounding of Aphrodite and

74. On those exempla, see Faulkner 2008. Maravela 2014, 25 offers an interesting feminist interpretation of Aphrodite' paradigmatic exempla: "When examined in the light of the poetics and 'rhetoric' of the Homeric *paradeigmata*, Aphrodite's mythological examples offer glimpses into the cognition of the humiliated and tongue-tied goddess in the wake of her affair with the mortal Anchises."

75. Maravela 2014, 27.

76. Lang 1983, 162.

77. Lang 1983, 157-164. The link to our study is that, as she says, binding is a form of death.

Ares, copying the understandable hostility to the gods on the part of Heracles and Otus and Ephialtes",[78] takes part in the process of reverberation of ancient mythological tales in the whole narrative:

That is, whether an *Iliad* theme attracted old tales as *exempla* or an old tale inspired an *Iliad* episode for which the old tale was used as support, each would be liable over time to infiltration of details from the other. For if like attracts like in epic narrative, as the use of both similes and mythological *paradeigmata* suggests, it is probable that in a situation of ongoing, non-static composition this kind of attraction, […] would be a force acting mutually between stories.[79]

The importance of this passage is thus much more than anecdotic. This reverberation contributes not only to the general value of *Iliad* 5 for the anthropological difference between gods and mankind, but to the unity of the *Iliad* as a whole epic poem as I shall develop elsewhere.

Coming back to the details of the passage, we note the strangeness of the character of Ares, the first mythological exemplum taken by Dione and the second god enduring a wound by Diomedes in the narrative. As shows Loraux, this often neglected god is interesting for his ambiguities: even though considered as the god of war,[80] warrior himself, he is attacked and wounded by a mortal and eventually defeated by his sister goddess Athena. He is immortal, but he almost dies in several occasions. Let us note the new formulation of gods' immortality in line 402 of Dione's discourse about Hades οὐ μὲν γάρ τι καταθνητός γε τέτυκτο, negative as it is.[81]

Thus, after reading the whole book 5 of the *Iliad*, we may complete our grid:

78. Lang 1983, 163.
79. Lang 1983, 163-4.
80. See Loraux 1986, 347-8 quoted above (n. 57).
81. The line is repeated about Ares in line 901, see Loraux 1986, 343 quoted above.

ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν	[mortal humans]
Vulnerability and suffering *ἀχθομένην ὀδύνῃσι* without dying *ἄμβροτον αἷμα called ἰχώρ*	[vulnerability and suffering] [may lead to death] [αἷμα → death]
[gods move freely everywhere] *πετέσθην* *μεσσηγὺς γαίης τε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.* abode on Olympus	Move on earth: *χαμαὶ ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων* *χαμαὶ* [exclusion from Olympus except for Ganymedes]
ἀχλύς *Ἄϊδος κυνέην, μή μιν ἴδοι ὄβριμος Ἄρης* gift of invisibility	[Visible body, unable to escape except by being made a ghost like Aeneas, thanks of Apollo] Gods invisible for man, except if they dissipate the mist from their eyes
Food and drink *οὐ γὰρ σῖτον ἔδουσ', οὐ πίνουσ' αἴθοπα οἶνον,* [nectar] and ambrosia: *ἀμβροσί-* mentioned for Aphrodite's *peplos* and for the food of immortal horses]	[bread and wine] [*σῖτον ἔδουσ', πίνουσ' αἴθοπα οἶνον*]

Other books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* may contribute to a more detailed image, but it seems that book 5 already gives a good portrayal of the opposition between gods and mankind, deserving Loraux's judgment: "l'un des plus beaux exemples d'une pensée de la limite à l'œuvre dans un texte".[82]

An important missing anthropological criterion appears elsewhere in Homer, I am thinking of language, that is emphasized with *καλέονται* in 5.342. But all the same, book 5 provides Diomedes' *aristeia* as an excellent sample of Homeric anthropology.

82. Loraux 1986, 353.

As a whole, Diomedes' *aristeia* told in book 5 of the *Iliad*, showing three fights of a mortal against gods, proves that the gods are vulnerable, but remain "living" as immortals. The mortal who tries to damage them may hurt them as far they do not belong to the best of Olympus, but not more: Paeon will care for their wounds and pains. Besides, only some gods can become men's targets, gods who do not belong to the first rank of Olympic gods. Limiting ourselves to the gods who take part in the Trojan War, we find vulnerability in Aphrodite and Ares, on the Trojan side only, as Athena says in the warnings addressed to her *protégé* and again when she appears to be manipulating Diomedes against Ares.

The whole set of Athene's advice to Diomedes seems to prove that the gods use humans as weapons against their own divine antagonists, as if war on earth were a substitute for the prohibited war in Olympus.

If we take now the whole set of the "conversation" between gods and Diomedes, we see that those discourses form an arch over Book 5:

Athena's first advice: don't attack any god but Aphrodite
    Diomedes wounds Aphrodite
Apollo's advice: don't shoot any god because of the ontological difference between gods and men
Athena's first advice recalled by Diomedes
Athena's second advice: don't strike any god but Ares
Diomedes strikes and wounds Ares

Could this kind of composition be a feature of Oral poetic device, as an aid to memorizing the stages of the book? Elizabeth Minchin well show "the importance of story structure" for "involving one's listeners", which is available for memory, linking together the *aoidos* and the audience.[83]

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83. MINCHIN 2001, 213. More properly for Diomedes' aristeia in book 5, see RICHARDSON 1998, 46.

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ODYSSEUS OF MANY WAYS: DIVINE, HUMAN AND "SUB-HUMAN"

The *Odyssey* offers us a kaleidoscope of perspectives on human experience, particularly through the adventures of its hero, Odysseus. His story enables us to imagine not only human life at all levels of society and in good and bad times, but also what it might be like to live as an immortal god or even to be a dead in the underworld. The poem invites us to consider what it means to be human and where the line lies that we cannot cross in order to remain human.[1] In this study I shall try to chart Odysseus' passage through his near-divine and sub-human experiences to return to his normal human life back in Ithaca, paying particular attention to the uses of epithets and similes that compare him to various non-human beings. For example, in what ways can Odysseus be 'godlike' or like a lion, an octopus or even a smouldering log? Reading the *Odyssey* in this way, I hope to illuminate the extraordinary range of beings that Odysseus could potentially be and what it means to be human or not human in the Odyssean world.

Odysseus as a godlike man: Books 1-3

Odysseus is introduced as the hero of the *Odyssey* right from the start (*Od.* 1.1-6; trans. Verity):

> *ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ*
> *πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·*
> *πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,*
> *πολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,*
> *ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων.*

1. Hartog 2001, 22 simply puts that the *Odyssey* makes a story out of the dividing lines that make humans 'neither god nor beast'.

Tell me, Muse, of the man of many turns, who was driven
far and wide after he had sacked the sacred city of Troy.
Many were the men whose cities he saw, and learnt their minds,
many the sufferings on the open sea he endured in his heart,
struggling for his own life and his companions' homecoming.

The poem emphatically tells us with its very first word that it is about a man (*ἄνδρα*), who has many ways and turns (*πολύτροπον*), with many roles and guises.[2] He is resourceful, the sacker of cities (or of *the* famous city), the crafty warrior and a traveller, who saw many cities and met many people. He suffered much at sea, yet a survivor, who is also a leader who tried to save his companions, though unsuccessfully.

Soon his other roles follow – he is a husband (13) and Calypso's lover (14) who wishes to keep him with her forever (15), meaning that he could potentially be an immortal god.[3] Yet he is an object of pity in the eyes of the gods, except, of course, for Poseidon (20-21) who is still angry at the 'godlike Odysseus' (*ἀντιθέῳ Ὀδυσῆι*), named at last on line 21.[4] This epithet suggesting that he is comparable or equal to gods is applied to Odysseus eleven times in the poem, but its use is highly ironical in this particular context in which he is hated and made powerless by a real god.[5]

2. Cf. West in Heubeck, West and Hainsworth 1988, on *Od.* 1.1, for the meaning of *πολύτροπος* debated since antiquity, e.g. 'turning many ways, of many devices, ingenious' or 'much wandering'. See also Clay 1997 (originally published in 1983), 29-31, where she argues that the word 'emphasises not only the multiplicity of Odysseus' wonderings and sufferings, but also the multiplicity of his mind' (31). Stanford 1959, 206 on *Od.* 1.1 suggests translating it as 'The man of many moves' to preserve the ambiguity. Jones 1991, who adopts this translation, notes on 1.1 (98): 'Stanford (1950) shows that Odysseus has more *polu-* ('many') epithets attached uniquely to him (eight) than any other character (others only have one at the most). Homer goes out of his way to stress Odysseus' multiplicity of character.'

3. In fact Odysseus was cared for by Calypso like a god (*Od.* 8.453).

4. Cf. Clay 1997, 26-29, with the literature cited there for the significance of Odysseus' anonymity. See also de Jong 2001, 7, for the suppression of Odysseus' name as a common Odyssean motif.

5. *ἀντίθεος* (godlike) applied to Odysseus at *Od.* 1.21, 2.17, 4.741, 6.331, 13.126, 14.40, 15.90, 19.456, 20.369, 21.254 and 22.291.

In the course of Book 1, we learn more about his human profile through Athena's words as she lobbies with Zeus for his release. We learn that Odysseus is detained by Calypso against his will (1.45-62) and he is longing to see smoke rising from his land and even wishing to die (59). Here is a crisis which could potentially turn Odysseus into something non-human – i.e. the dead. He approaches the same state of despair causing him to wish for death again in Book 10 when his foolish companions open the bag of winds and his ship is blown away from Ithaca (49-52) and when he is told by Circe that he has to visit the land of the dead before he is able to go home (496-499).[6]

Zeus replies to Athena by saying he would not forget 'godlike Odysseus' (*Ὀδυσῆος θείοιο* 1.65). This epithet is applied to Odysseus as often as 28 times in the *Odyssey*, most often in reference to his house and his son Telemachus.[7] Zeus favours Odysseus because he used to make generous offerings to the gods. What we have here is the image of a godlike and pious man, loved by the gods, especially by Athena and Zeus.

Later in the book during the conversation between Telemachus and Athena disguised as Mentes, Odysseus is mentioned in his role as a father and as a guest (*ξεῖνος*), and described as 'enduring' (*Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος* 1.87, 129)[8] and 'resourceful' (*πολυμήχανος* 1.205). These are both frequent formulae exclusive to Odysseus, expressing his 'human' quality, but their usage later in the poem can point to his temporary departure from his human existence. The largest concentration of the formula 'of en-

6. Cf. de Jong 2001, 14, for the parallels between these passages.

7. *θεῖος* (godlike) applied to Odysseus at *Od.* 1.65, 2.233, 259, 394, 3.398, 4.682, 799, 5.11, 198, 15.63, 313, 347, 554, 16.53, 335, 17.3, 230, 402, 18.417, 20.248, 283, 298, 325, 21.74, 189, 244, 432 and 24.151.

8. *ταλασίφρων* is only applied to Odysseus, meaning 'enduring' (*LSJ*: 'patient of mind'; Diggle et al. 2021: 'with enduring mind') appearing in the genitive formula *Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος* in the total of eleven times in the *Odyssey*. The other occurrences of this formula are: *Od.* 3.84, 4.241, 270, 5.31, 17.34, 114, 292, 510, 18.311. It also occurs once in the *Iliad* (11.466), applied to Odysseus when he is enduring a difficult situation, surrounded by the enemy.

during Odysseus' is found in Book 17 (four times), the book in which Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, endures the humiliation and maltreatment by the goatherd Melanthius and the suitors. It includes the incident of Antinous striking Odysseus with a footstool (17.463-465), when Odysseus is compared to a rock (463 *πέτρη*) as he stands firm unmoved.[9] The quality expressed in 'enduring' can be associated with Odysseus' temporary departure from his 'human' state, to be like an inanimate object, in this context.

Similarly *πολυμήχανος* ('resourceful'), which refers to another of Odysseus' human characteristics, points towards his status as an almost super-human hero. Its usage as a predicate in the nominative and not as an epithet at 1.205 is a sole exception in Homer,[10] as it is always used in the vocative elsewhere and almost exclusively used in the full line formula of formal address (tr. Verity as at 5.203):

διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ ("Zeus-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles"), indicating his lineage from Zeus and his father.[11]

In Book 2, through the words of Telemachus and Mentor at the assembly, we learn that Odysseus was a kindly king like a father (2.47, 234)[12] and in Halitherses' prophecy Odysseus is described as *πολύμητις* ('crafty', 'resourceful', 2.173), another distinctive epithet indicating his intelligence.[13]

9. Cf. Steiner 2010, 137, on 17.463-463 on the immobility and steadfastness expressed by this simile, which is a trait shared between Odysseus and Penelope. For this trait, see Zeitlin 1995, 126-127.

10. Cf. de Jong 2001 on 1.205.

11. This formula occurs 15 times in the *Odyssey* (5.203, 10.401, 456, 488, 504, 11.60, 92, 405, 473, 617, 13.375, 14.486, 16.167, 22.167, 24.192) and seven times in the *Iliad* (2.173, 4.358, 8.93, 9.308, 624, 10.144, 23.723). There is one more usage of *πολυμήχανε* in the *Odyssey* not in the full line formula at 24.192, where it occurs in Agamemnon's exclamation, *ὄλβιε Λαέρταο πάι, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ* ('Fortunate son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles!', trans. Verity).

12. Cf. de Jong 2001, 57 on 229-34, for the repeated mention of Odysseus as a good king by Mentor, Telemachus, Penelope and Athena.

13. *πολύμητις* occurs 68 times in the *Odyssey* and 18 times in the *Iliad*, all of which describe Odysseus. The most common usage of this epithet is within the full-line speech-introducing formula *τὸν/τὴν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς*, which occurs

In Book 3, Nestor also tells Telemachus how Odysseus surpassed others in intelligence (*μῆτις*, 3.120)[14] and how Athena openly favoured and supported Odysseus (3.218-220) as no other god has ever done to any humans (3.221-222).

Therefore, by the end of Book 3, we have a fairly complete image of Odysseus as a man who is intelligent, resourceful, godlike and loved by the gods. He is also defined by his role as the father, husband, traveller, king and warrior. His human identity is somewhat threatened by the unwanted love of Calypso, whether by her offer of immortality or by his own wish for death, but his image is undoubtedly human so far.

Odysseus as an animal and an inanimate object: Books 4-6

However, different aspects of Odysseus begin to appear from Book 4, which cast a shadow over his image as a man. In Book 4, hearing Menelaus' tale of the enduring Odysseus (*Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος*, 241, 270) in the Wooden Horse, Telemachus laments that his father did not escape death despite his iron heart (*κραδίη σιδηρέη*, 293). An iron heart could be a steady heart in a positive sense, as when Euryclea assures Odysseus that her spirit (*μένος*) is as steady as a rock or iron (*ὡς ... λίθος ἠὲ σίδηρος*, 19.493-494). But it could also be an unfeeling one, as when Odysseus criticises Penelope's apparent indifference (23.172 *σιδήρεον ... ἦτορ*) or when Calypso says that her heart is not made of iron (*θυμός ... σιδήρεος*, 5.191).[15] Later

47 times in the *Odyssey* and five times in the *Iliad*. The epithets used in the προσέφη-type formulae reflect essential elements of the speaker's characterisatoin, such as intelligence for Odysseus, as demonstrated in Yamagata 1989, 98-102.

14. The word *μῆτις* occurs 15 times in the *Odyssey* of which eight instances refer to Odysseus' intelligence or plan (2.279, 3.120, 9.414, 422, 10.193, 13.303, 20.20, 23.125). The remainder of the cases are used for Athena twice (13.299, 386), Penelope twice (19.158, 326), Nestor once (3.18), the suitors once (4.678) and Laertes once (4.739).

15. In the *Iliad* Hector describes Achilles' heart as made of iron (*σιδήρεος ... θυμός*, *Il.* 22. 357) when he refuses Hector's plea to hand his body over to his family. Priam's heart (ἦτορ) is also described as made of iron (*σιδήρειον*) by Hecuba (*Il.* 24.205) and by Achilles (*Il.* 24.521) for his audacity to go to Achilles in order to ransom Hector's body. This could imply both strength and lack of normal human feeling.

in the poem when Eurylochus says that Odysseus must be entirely made of iron (*σιδήρεα πάντα τέτυκται*, 12.280), he is not only commenting on Odysseus' superhuman strength, but also protesting about his lack of understanding of the needs of his weaker companions (279-293).[16] It is this combination of the strength and ruthlessness that later enables Odysseus to conceal his pity for his weeping wife, by keeping his eyes fixed as if made of horn or iron (*κέρα ... ἢὲ σίδηρος*) (19.211-212).

Odysseus is also compared with animals. Menelaus assures Telemachus that once Odysseus returns home, he will kill Penelope's suitors as a lion kills a doe and her new-born fawns (4. 335-40). Odysseus is described with a lion simile five times in total in the *Odyssey*, four cases of which concern his slaughter of the suitors (actual and imagined) as here (22. 402-405, 23. 48 and 17.126-130 where Telemachus is quoting Menelaus' lines in 4.335-340).[17] Odysseus is also described as 'lion-hearted' (*θυμολέοντα*, 4.724, 814) twice by Penelope in this book. This comparison again could be ambiguous – it could reflect positive heroic quality such as courage, valour and strength,[18] but could also suggest savagery and aggression. In the other lion simile at 6.130-34, where the naked Odysseus appears in front of Nausicaa and her young female companions, he looks like a potential threat to them. Interestingly Penelope is also described with a lion simile in 4.791-792, as she worries about her son's safety and feels helpless, likened to a lion surrounded by hunters.[19]

Odysseus' potential to be an animal or an inanimate object is demonstrated most clearly in Book 5. Here he has escaped the fate of becoming

16. Cf. Heubeck in Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989, on 12.279 and 280.

17. Cf. de Jong 2001, 105, on 333-40 with studies listed in note 15.

18. Cf. Pucci 1987, 162, n.10, on *thumos agenor* applied to Odysseus' heart as well as the lion in the simile at *Il.* 12. 299-306.

19. Cf. Moulton 1977, 124, who notes the effect of the similes to bring Odysseus and Penelope together in the audience's mind, and Podlecki 1971, 84, for the unity of the two characters. Pache 2016 argues that the lion images in both Odysseus' and Penelope' similes are connected to the theme of revenge in the *Odyssey*. See also Turkeltaub 2015 for the complexity of Penelope's lion simile.

an immortal husband of Calypso, thanks to Hermes' arrival, and one of his trademark formulae *πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς* (long-suffering great Odysseus; tr. Lattimore) appears for the first time, as he shudders at Calypso's advice to build a boat to sail away (5.171).[20] Despite the indication of his closeness to the goddess in this passage, the contrast between Odysseus' human status and Calypso's divinity has never been shown as starkly as when they sit down to eat together at 5. 195-199, with him sitting on the seat pointedly described as the one previously vacated by Hermes, and yet given human food opposite the goddess who is having nectar and ambrosia.[21] After the meal, she addresses him with his full heroic title which occurs for the first time in the poem (5.203; trans. Verity):

Διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, ("Zeus-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles"), which seems to signal his return to human life, connecting him with his father Laertes, representing his family, while the epithet διογενής suggests his divine lineage, and πολυμήχανος describing his central characteristic. His next activity, the making of his boat, also connects him back to his famed image as a resourceful hero and the architect of the Wooden Horse.

However, after departing from Calypso's island when his boat is destroyed by Poseidon, Odysseus has to swim for two days and nights, with both his life and human identity at risk (5.374-393). This is indirectly seen through the simile of a father recovering from illness, which is as welcome to his children as the sight of the land is welcome to Odysseus (5.394-399; trans. Verity):[22]

20. In Homer the adjective πολύτλας appears only as part of the formula πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς, which occurs 37 times in the *Odyssey* and five times in the *Iliad*. On 5.171 de Jong 2001 observes that 'Odysseus' reaction to the news of his 'release' is the same as Calypso's: a shudder', pointing out the correspondences between that line and 5.116. This may be another indication of Odysseus' closeness to Calypso and his godlike status.

21. Cf. de Jong 2001 on 5.196-201.

22. For the complexity of this simile in which Odysseus can be seen both in the role of the joyful children and the father who is 'suffering strong pains', see Moulton 1977, 128-129 and de Jong 2001, 144 on 5.394-395.

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἄν ἀσπάσιος βίοτος παίδεσσι φανήῃ
πατρός, ὃς ἐν νούσῳ κεῖται κρατέρ' ἄλγεα πάσχων,
δηρὸν τηκόμενος, στυγερὸς δέ οἱ ἔχραε δαίμων,
ἀσπάσιον δ' ἄρα τόν γε θεοὶ κακότητος ἔλυσαν,
ὣς Ὀδυσῆ' ἀσπαστὸν ἐείσατο γαῖα καὶ ὕλη,
νῆχε δ' ἐπειγόμενος ποσὶν ἠπείρου ἐπιβῆναι.

As when his children see welcome signs of life in their father
who lies ailing in bed, wasting away in the grip of a long
and painful illness – for some hateful divinity has assailed him –
and then the gods send him a welcome release from his anguish,
so the land and its woods came as a welcome sight to Odysseus,
and he swam on, impatient to set foot upon dry land.

But he was not out of danger yet, as he finds himself near the shore where he could be dashed against sharp rocks by the waves. His desperate effort to cling to a rock is memorably compared to an octopus in a simile at 5. 432-435 (trans. Verity):

ὡς δ' ὅτε πουλύποδος θαλάμης ἐξελκομένοιο
πρὸς κοτυληδονόφιν πυκιναὶ λάιγγες ἔχονται,
ὣς τοῦ πρὸς πέτρῃσι θρασειάων ἀπὸ χειρῶν
ῥινοὶ ἀπέδρυφθεν· τὸν δὲ μέγα κῦμα κάλυψεν.

As when an octopus is dragged from its hiding-place, and
pebbles cling in thick clusters to its suckers, in the same way
pieces of skin were stripped from Odysseus' bold hands and
stuck to the rock; and a huge wave hid him from view.

The simile appears to refer not only to Odysseus' physical strength and obstinacy, but, as Hainsworth observes, also to his intelligence and resourcefulness for which the octopus was well-known.[23] Odysseus finally safely swims into a river, as a suppliant to the river-god (5. 449), but even in the

23. Cf. Hainsworth in Heubeck, West and Hainsworth 1988, 285-286 on 432-435, referring to Theognis 215-218.

calmer water of the river, his near-death state continues as he finds himself momentarily unable to breathe in his exhaustion (5. 457). He eventually reaches the shore, and as he finds shelter underneath two trees and covers himself with fallen leaves to sleep, he is like a smouldering log in a heap of ash, almost inanimate (488-90; trans. Lattimore):

ὡς δ' ὅτε τις δαλὸν σποδιῇ ἐνέκρυψε μελαίνῃ
ἀγροῦ ἐπ' ἐσχατιῆς, ᾧ μὴ πάρα γείτονες ἄλλοι,
σπέρμα πυρὸς σώζων, ἵνα μή ποθεν ἄλλοθεν αὖῃ,
ὣς Ὀδυσεὺς φύλλοισι καλύψατο·

As when a man buries a burning log in a black ash heap
in a remote place in the country, where none lives near as neighbours,
and saves the seed of fire, having no other place to get a light from,
so Odysseus buried himself in the leaves, …

The simile shows Odysseus' state of being barely alive with exhaustion, almost like a lifeless log, with only a tiny seed of life left within him.[24] Then the long-suffering great Odysseus (6.1 *πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς*) sleeps literally like a log, until Nausicaa and her attendants on their washing expedition arrive and wake him. As mentioned above he appears to them totally naked, except for a leafy branch that he holds in front of him (6.127-129), and is compared to a hungry lion (130-134), in the only lion simile applied to Odysseus in this poem not in connection with his killing of the suitors.[25] As de Jong observes, he was fearful of falling prey to wild animals earlier (5.473), but now he appears to the girls as a wild animal himself who might harm them.[26] The passage indicates that Odysseus is verging on a sub-human state, that of a hungry wild animal. He eats greedily as he has not eaten for so long (6.249-250; trans. Verity):

24. Cf. de Jong 2001, 147 on 488-491.

25. Garvie 1994, 116-117 on 6.133-134 *κέλεται δὲ ... ἐλθεῖν* notes the parallel to *Il.* 12.300-301 except for 'the unheroic *γαστήρ* here instead of the *θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ* of that passage.' Odysseus in this passage is more like a wild animal than a hero of the Trojan War.

26. De Jong 2001, 158, on 130-7.

ἦ τοι ὁ πιῖνε καὶ ἤσθε πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
ἁρπαλέως· δηρὸν γὰρ ἐδηούος ἦεν ἄπαστος.

he who had endured so much, ate and drank voraciously,
for it had been a long time since he had tasted food.

However, the repeated use of the formula 'the long-suffering great Odysseus' at 6.1 and here also reminds us of his human and heroic quality and identity. After a wash in the river and with Athena pouring beauty on him, like a master craftsman gilding a silver statue with gold (6.232-235), Odysseus looks beautiful again and the impressed Nausicaa says that he looks like the gods (*θεοῖσιν ἔοικε*, 243). Here Odysseus can be compared to both the gods and the inanimate statue, but they signal his rehabilitation to his state of a godlike man and his 'return from wild nature …. to civilization',[27] rather than a 'sub-human' state of an unfeeling object. In Book 23, too, after his slaughter of the suitors which renders him like a bloodied lion (23. 48), Odysseus is restored to his civilised condition with a bath and through Athena's help, described with the same simile (6. 232-235; trans. Lattimore):[28]

ὡς δ' ὅτε τις χρυσὸν περιχεύεται ἀργύρῳ ἀνὴρ
ἴδρις, ὃν Ἥφαιστος δέδαεν καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
τέχνην παντοίην, χαρίεντα δὲ ἔργα τελείει,
ὣς ἄρα τῷ κατέχευε χάριν κεφαλῇ τε καὶ ὤμοις.

And as when a master craftsman overlays gold on silver,
and he is one who was taught by Hephaistos and Pallas Athene
in art complete, and grace is on every work he finishes,
so Athene gilded with grace his head and his shoulders.

27. De Jong 2001, 164.

28. *Od*. 6.232-234 = 23.159-161. Friedrich 1981, 125-133, argues that the sequence of the lion simile/the bath/the artist simile in both Books 6 and 23 'parallels the transition from brute nature to civilized life' (131).

It is significant that each time he looks like a god, Athena is working behind the scene to cause the transformation. Later in the poem when Athena temporarily restores Odysseus' heroic stature at Eumaeus' house so that he can be recognised by Telemachus, he looks like the gods in Telemachus' eye (16.200 is nearly identical to 6.243, with which Nausicaa describes Odysseus after the wash). It is also Athena herself who, in the guise of a herald, advertises Odysseus to the Phaeacians as a stranger who is like the gods in stature (8.14). In the song of Demodocus about the sack of Troy in the same book, Odysseus in the battle is compared to Ares (8.518),[29] though that image is immediately undercut in the main narrative by his weeping and the simile comparing him to a weeping widow (8.522-531).[30]

Odysseus as Nobody, among the dead and an animal again: Books 7-12

The tale of his adventures that Odysseus recounts to the Phaeacians is another part of the poem where he oscillates between his human and non-human state in his struggle to survive and return home. In Book 9 in the cave of the Cyclops, he has to become 'Nobody' (*Οὖτις*, 364), figuratively erasing himself from existence,[31] and disguise as a ram in order to escape (431-435).[32] The name Οὖτις is later echoed in Polyphemus' own impression of Odysseus as οὐτιδανός ('mere nobody', 515) which indicates that Odysseus is still registered as a human being, but insignificant in stature in the giant's eye. However, Odysseus does not quite call himself 'nobody' (*οὔτις*), as if he conserves his existence as a living human being with the subtle modification of the tone. Besides, as has often been pointed out,

29. The comparison to Ares is found only twice in the *Odyssey*, here and at 8.115 (applied to a Phaeacian called Euryalus), but it is a very common feature in the *Iliad*. Cf. Fränkel 1977, 96.

30. Cf. Morrison 2005, 83 who argues that Homer's simile reveals Odysseus' inner feelings demonstrating that he is 'anything but godlike'.

31. Cf. Pucci 1987, 183.

32. Cf. *Il.* 3.196-198 where Priam compares Odysseus to a prominent ram among the flocks.

οὔτις has the alternative form μήτις, and the two words pun on the pair *Οὖτις / μῆτις*, the latter of which, cunning intelligence, is the essence of Odysseus' identity. In this way, Odysseus is preserving his human and heroic identity by concealing it in his pseudonym.[33] Moreover, he uses his intelligence (*μῆτις*) and technology that is unavailable to the Cyclops to defeat him, first with wine to get him drunk and then using the sharpened and heated olive stake to blind him, the latter of which is vividly compared to the processes of drilling and ironwork (9.384-385, 391-394).[34] Eventually he cannot refrain from revealing his real name to the Cyclops for the sake of reclaiming his heroic life and identity,[35] albeit with disastrous consequences (9.504-505).

In Books 10 and 11, Odysseus has to go to the land of the dead, behaving like a dead man on one hand, but on the other he is enduring the same fate as Heracles (11. 617-619). The comparison with Heracles could be another indication as to how close Odysseus was to becoming a god, for Heracles after all was a hero who did become a god (11.602-604).[36] On the other end of the scale, Odysseus also witnesses the fates of Tityus (11.576-581), Tantalus (11.582-592) and Sisyphus (11.593-600), the three transgressors against the gods, being punished for their *hybris*.[37] Their crimes illustrate the line that humans cannot cross in order to remain human. That Odysseus has learned this lesson can be seen later in the poem when he restrains Euryclea's cry of triumph after he has killed the suitors (22.411-416).

33. Cf. Heubeck in Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989 on 9.364-367, Edwards 1987, 120-121 and Austin 1972, 15-16 for the play of *Οὖτις – οὔτις / μήτις – μῆτις* at 9.408-14. Cf. *Od*. 20.20 where Odysseus recalls that his *μῆτις* rescued him from the Cyclops' cave.

34. Cf. Edwards on 'Similes' in Finkelberg 2011, 802-803.

35. Cf. Pucci 1998, 127. See also Frame 1978, 64-65 on 9.504-505 as the 'return from death'.

36. Cf. Heubeck in Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989 on 11.601-627 on the awkwardness of the presence of Heracles' image (*εἴδωλον*) in Hades. See also Alden 2017, 173-180, for many traits shared by Heracles and Odysseus.

37. Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1995, 69, for these three as the transgressors against cosmic order.

In his account of his journey before reaching Calypso's island, Odysseus goes through an animal-like state again, when he had to cling to a fig tree like a bat (*ὡς νυκτερίς*, 12.433), while waiting for his life-saving timbers to re-emerge from Chalybdis (12. 432-433). His agony continues till the evening (439-440; trans. Lattimore):

….ἦμος δ' ἐπὶ δόρπον ἀνὴρ ἀγορῆθεν ἀνέστη
κρίνων νείκεα πολλὰ δικαζομένων αἰζηῶν,
τῆμος δὴ τά γε δοῦρα Χαρύβδιος ἐξεφαάνθη.

…. when man leaves the law court, for dinner,
after judging the many disputes brought him by litigious young men;
that was the time it took the timbers to appear from Charybdis.

This description may be a flashback of his memories of being a king and judge back in Ithaca, which aptly brings his animal state to an end and takes him closer to human civilisation and his heroic self again.[38]

Odysseus as a hero again: Book 13

Although the *Odyssey* has 24 books Odysseus' actual voyage to Ithaca ends at the beginning of Book 13 on board a Phaeacian ship while he is in deep sleep like death (79-80). The comparison of his sleep to death seems to signal Odysseus' definitive return from his near-death experiences, including his visit to the world of the dead, to his human life in the world of the living. We are only half-way through the poem, and Odysseus has yet to fight his enemy before he can win back his house as its master, but with Athena beside him, the audience and readers know that he has now regained his heroic status and will be guided to his victory.

After a conversation in which both Athena and Odysseus hide their true identity from each other, the goddess reveals herself and addresses him affectionately, saying that he is the best in shrewd counsel among men as she

38. Cf. de Jong 2001, 311: '… he uses a 'culture' comparison to underline that, as a civilized man, he did not allow nature to defeat him.'

is among the gods (13. 296-99). What follows is an extraordinary scene of a goddess and a man sitting together under an olive tree discussing the plan for his revenge (13.372-440).[39] Athena opens their conversation by addressing him with his heroic full-line formula, *διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ* (375), which he has not heard since he left Calypso's island (cf. 5.203) where he lived like a god (8.453). This address made to him by another goddess here is a clear signal that he is a godlike hero once again.[40] Yet, he needs to conceal his identity for now, in order to defeat his enemy, so Athena turns his appearance into that of an old beggar (13.429-38).

Odysseus as a beggar, hero, animal and inanimate object: Books 14-24

In Books 14 to 16 Odysseus begins his journey home by visiting his faithful swineherd Eumaeus at his farm. It is here where he is reunited with Telemachus and establishes his status as the 'father of Telemachus'.[41] In the conversation at Eumaeus' house, Odysseus' various roles as the father, master, king and hero are recalled. Odysseus returns to his own house disguised as a beggar in Book 17 (260) and gradually works his way through Books 17 to 20 to the position where he can defeat the suitors. Books 21 to 24 recount Odysseus' triumph over the suitors and his full return to his house as the husband, father, master and the king.

The predominant image of Odysseus in these later books of the poem is firmly that of a man, albeit visually in disguise as an old beggar, but the characters around him, often unaware of his true identity, talk about him

39. Cf. Anghelina 2015 for the symbolic significance of the olive tree as the presence of Athena as the protector of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*.

40. This formula occurs 15 times in the *Odyssey* of which eight times are as an address from a goddess to Odysseus, i.e. by Calypso at 5.205, by Circe at 10.401, 456, 488, 504 and by Athena at 13.375, 16.167 and 24.542, each signalling an important moment in his adventures. It occurs seven times in the *Iliad*, including one address by Athena (2.173).

41. As Odysseus calls himself in the *Iliad* at 2.260 (*Τηλεμάχοιο πατήρ*) and 4.354 (*Τηλεμάχοιο φίλον πατέρα*).

as a husband, father, master and king.[42] But in this half of the poem, too, there are moments when his non-human qualities resurface. As already seen, his strength and endurance make him comparable to inanimate objects such as a rock (17.463-464), horn and iron (19.211), when he suppresses his emotions in order to conceal his identity, while his handsome appearance restored by Athena after the bath makes him comparable to a skilfully crafted gold and silver statue (23.159-161; cf. 6.232-234).

On the eve of the day of the revenge, as Odysseus lies awake turning back and forth pondering how to defeat the suitors, he is even compared to a sausage being roasted over a fire (20.25-30). However, as Rutherford observes, this image is ambiguous, as Odysseus can also be the man who is cooking the sausage in the simile (25) and this ambiguity corresponds to his precarious position from which he can be either the 'agent or victim, avenger or helpless onlooker'.[43] A little earlier in the same scene, his heart was 'growling' at the unfaithful serving women passing by, like a mother dog protecting her puppies (20.13-15). The words that he speaks to his heart to restrain it also contain a dog-word – that he had endured a more 'dog-like' thing (κύντερον, 20.18)[44] in the cave of the Cyclops (20.18-20), indicating that he is not going to be a dog-like creature as those unfaithful women or the Cyclops is.

More animal images are applied to Odysseus in the latter half of the poem, especially in relation to his attack on the suitors. When an eagle appears carrying a goose at 15.160-164, Helen interprets it as an omen for Odysseus's successful revenge on the suitors (174-178).[45] Similarly an ea-

42. Austin 1975, 47-48 observes on the 'remarkable paucity of name-epithet formulas uttered by characters in the poem' about Odysseus, that 'Odysseus is the topic of almost every conversation in the poem. People are always talking about him or to him, but their preference is for other circumlocutions, commonly those that express his relationship to them as father, husband, child, or master.'

43. Rutherford 1992, 206-207 on *Od*. 20.22-30.

44. Rutherford 1992, 206 on 18 sees a pun on *κύων* (14) in this word.

45. Contrasted with another eagle holding a dove which appears as a bad omen to the suitors at *Od*. 20.242-243. Cf. Boraston 1911, 234-235.

gle appears in Penelope's dream, killing her pet geese, and announces in human voice that the eagle is in fact her husband, Odysseus, who is about to kill the suitors (19.536-550).[46] Odysseus is compared to an eagle once again in the last simile of the poem (24.538), as he is poised to attack the relatives of the dead suitors, before Zeus' thunderbolt and Athena stop the battle (24.539-545). The simile presents Odysseus both as an eagle and an Iliadic hero, as the same line occurs in the *Iliad* (*Il.* 22.308 = *Od.* 24.538), as the first line of a longer simile describing Hector's last desperate attack on Achilles (*Il.* 22.308-311).[47]

Three out of the four lion similes applied to Odysseus as the avenger against the suitors occur in this half of the poem (17.126-130, 22.402-405, 23.48). In Book 22, where the slaughter of the suitors actually takes place, Odysseus is compared not only to a lion which has killed an ox (22.402-405), but also to a gadfly which causes panic among cattle, to which the suitors are compared (22.299-301). In the same battle scene Odysseus and his men are collectively compared to vultures attacking smaller birds (22.302-309). Earlier at 16.216-219 when Odysseus and Telemachus are reunited for the first time after 19 years, they weep like sea-eagles or vultures whose chicks have been stolen, which prepares their image as birds and avengers later.

Odysseus of many ways

As the survey above shows, Odysseus is quite a shape-shifter, both literally, as his appearance has been changed by Athena to look like an old beggar, and figuratively, to appear like a variety of people, animals and inanimate objects. In the first half of the *Odyssey* he starts off as a man close to the gods but then goes through the animal-like state in which he struggles against elements and hunger to survive.[48] In the latter half, he is back in

46. Cf. Rood 2006 for bird images connected with Odysseus' revenge.

47. Cf. Heubeck on 24.538 in Russo, Fernandez-Galiano and Heubeck 1992.

48. Poivre 2006, 130 argues that the lion image is used to glorify the super-human in the *Iliad* while in the *Odyssey* it serves to glorify the man depicted in its total humanity, beau-

human society and his struggle is against human enemies. Here animal images are used to enhance his heroic qualities, including strength, ferocity and care for one's own people. The images of inanimate objects are used to illustrate Odysseus' ability to hide his feelings, except the simile of the metal statue is to highlight his heroic status as a favourite of Athena. So what does it mean to be human in the world of Odysseus?

I believe his reunion with Athena on arrival at Ithaca is the turning point of the poem and the key to defining who and what Odysseus really is. Let us return to Athena's words to Odysseus in Book 13 as they have revealed their true identity to each other (13.296-299, trans. Verity):

> *ἀλλ' ἄγε, μηκέτι ταῦτα λεγώμεθα, εἰδότες ἄμφω*
> *κέρδε', ἐπεὶ σὺ μέν ἐσσι βροτῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἁπάντων*
> *βουλῇ καὶ μύθοισιν, ἐγὼ δ' ἐν πᾶσι θεοῖσι*
> *μήτι τε κλέομαι καὶ κέρδεσιν·*
>
> *Come now, let us not talk like this any longer, since we are both well versed in deception: among mortals you surpass all men in plotting and tale-spinning, while among all the gods I am well known for cleverness and cunning.*

She points out, however, that Odysseus did not always notice who she was when she appeared to him and helped him in disguise (13.299-302). To this Odysseus replies that he did notice her on some occasions (13.322-323), but it is hard to recognise her, as she can take on anyone's form (13. 312-13). Then we realise that this exactly applies to Odysseus, too – he can take on any shape, human or divine, animal or inanimate, and is hard to recognise. He is not only like Athena in his intelligence and shrewdness, but also in his multiple identity. Just as Odysseus can be compared to an eagle, Athena takes on the form of a bird (1.320; 3.371-72 as a sea-eagle; 22.

tiful and feeble at the same time, close to the animals in sharing the same mortal condition and needs

239-40 as a swallow[49]). Odysseus is not just like any god, but more specifically like *Athena*. And if his true nature is to be like Athena, who can take on any disguise, then, to be godlike, animal-like or object-like, can all be part of being him and being human.

This conclusion also makes us reconsider the function of Odyssean similes. The similes in the *Odyssey* have often been underrated compared with those in the *Iliad*, with a critic saying that they 'do not carve out for themselves a truly central role in the construction of the epic's meaning.'[50] However, we must take into account how the whole range of beings to which Odysseus is compared, often through quite short similes, has a cumulative effect of echoing the central theme of the poem, *πολύτροπος* Odysseus, the man of many ways.[51] Aristotle observes that the *Iliad* is a poem of passion and the *Odyssey* a poem of character.[52] The exceptionally varied images in the similes applied to Odysseus is surely one of the *Odyssey*'s most successful devices to bring out its hero's character.

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49. Odysseus is also associated with the swallow image when he is compared to a singer who stretches the string on the lyre and tries it out, making it sing like a swallow (21.406-411).

50. Buxton 2004, 149.

51. There are many cases to be made of the cumulative effects of similes and other images. Scott 1974, 123-124 and n.23, observes that the motifs of family life and love are developed in similes over the whole length of the poem. Rose 1979 argues that the passages with dog images in the latter part of the poem constitute a progression which marks the stages of Odysseus' return to his proper status on Ithaca. See also Magrath 1982, esp. 212: 'It is an eagle "terrible to hear", as Thornton has suggested, and as the bloody lion, "terrible to behold", that Odysseus stands out most vividly. He is the hero both of harmony and of violence, of culture as a figure of *charis* and of nature as a beast. To see only one side of "much-turning" Odysseus is to understand less than half of the *Odyssey*. He is the complete Greek hero because he represents in his character simultaneously beauty (*kosmos*) and the beast.'

52. *Poetics* 24, 1459b14, as noted by Stanford 1959, 207 on *Od.* 1.1.

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Panagiotis Kontonasios

WHY HECTOR LEFT THE BATTLE: A NEGLECTED COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE BETWEEN HUMAN AND DIVINE IN HOMER'S *ILIAD*

One of the major problems in Homer's *Iliad* is this: Hector, the heir to the throne and by far the best Trojan warrior, leaves the battlefield to go to the city of Troy at a critical moment for his army (6.86 ff.). Thus, the obvious question about that is why Hector does so and not just send a messenger or a herald to the city, since all that is required here is a message to be carried to the queen Hecuba. The passage were Hector is told to do that goes like this:

Ἕκτορ, ἀτὰρ σὺ πόλιν δὲ μετέρχεο[…]. 86
ὣς ἄρα φωνήσας ἀπέβη κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ· 116
ἀμφὶ δέ μιν σφυρὰ τύπτε καὶ αὐχένα δέρμα κελαινὸν
ἄντυξ ἣ πυμάτη θέεν ἀσπίδος ὀμφαλοέσσης.[1]

But do thou, Hector, go thy way to the city […]. So saying, Hector of the flashing helm departed, and the black hide at either end smote against his ankles and his neck, even the rim that ran about the outermost edge of his bossed shield.[2]

Scholars have long ago suggested some interpretations of the relevant verses. The most basic of these interpretations are two:

a) Hector is generally in the *Iliad* an inconsistent character. Thus, he appears elsewhere as a good father, husband, son, and hero full of piety, but elsewhere he proves reckless, arrogant, even coward, when confronted with great Greek heroes. According to van der Valk in particular, this

1. All Homeric texts are from the OCT.
2. All Homeric texts translated by Murray 1924.

inconsistency is due to Homer's oscillating between poetic objectivity and his nationalistic sentiments as a Greek.[3] Farron on the other hand believes that Homer in the case of Hector has different values compared to the rest of his heroes. So Hector's withdrawal from the battlefield, according to Farron, shows that this hero's physical space is at home with his family.[4]

b) The second basic interpretation of our problem is that Hector is a literary character and that is why he does things that a real character would not do. That literary character is exploited by Homer intentionally in the way we see him acting in the *Iliad*. So, all this is intentional and serves Homer's plan for the poem.[5] Somehow subsidiary to that interpretation is the approach that in the passage under consideration, even if the poet really tries to justify Hector's withdrawal from the battle, literature is not at its best.[6] Thus, we have two branches of that literary approach, namely an intentional one and an improvised one.

However, there are some very good reasons to insist on a realistic approach to the content of the Homeric epics concerning the literary characters that appear in them. Aristotle and the ancient scholars are rather clear on this. According to them, Homeric heroes act like real characters, but in a way that is fascinating by applying the technique of "reversal" (*περιπέτεια*) in that point that only the gods could prevent total catastrophe:

a) *καίτοι ταῦτα τὰ ποιήματα συνέστηκεν ὡς ἐνδέχεται ἄριστα καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα μιᾶς πράξεως μίμησις*.[7] "And yet the composition of these

3. Valk 1953. I quote here only the basic interpretations and some representantive scholars, in whose works one can find a rival bibliography. Although the problem is an old one, the basic arguments have not changed significantly as yet, since it is woven into the Homeric Question, which is still open. Cf. Trail 1990, 299 and 301; West 2011, 388. For modern approaches to Homeric epics see Peradotto 1997.

4. Farron 1978, especially p. 41; cf. Van Nortwick 2001, especially pp. 222, 225 and 233-4.

5. Kakridis 1971; cf. Romilly 1998, 55-80.

6. Kirk (ed.) 1990, 6.73-101n.

7. Arist. *Po.* 1462b 10-11.

poems is as perfect as can be and each of them is—as far as an epic may be—a representation of a single action.[8]

b) *ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἡ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τῶν πραττομένων μεταβολὴ*[9]

A "reversal" is a change of the situation into the opposite.

c) *εἰς τοσοῦτον προάγει τὰς περιπετείας ὡς μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτὰς ἄλλον εἰ μὴ μόνον μεταθεῖναι τὸ θεῖον.*[10]

He goes that far with the reversals that nobody else is able to change things but the divine".[11]

A characteristic example of that technique we find in the following verses of the *Iliad*, where the death of Paris is expected and finally avoided in terms of *περιπέτεια*:

καί νύ κεν εἴρυσσέν τε καὶ ἄσπετον ἤρατο κῦδος,
εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὀξὺ νόησε Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἀφροδίτη,
ἥ οἱ ῥῆξεν ἱμάντα βοὸς ἶφι κταμένοιο·[12] 375

And now would Menelaus have dragged him away, and won glory unspeakable, had not Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, been quick to see, and to his cost broken in twain the thong, cut from the hide of a slaughtered ox.

The syntactic form here is typical of similar phrases in the *Iliad*. I underline it here, both in the ancient text and in the translation, in order to be compared to the passage under consideration.

My interpretation is based on the aforementioned principles. More specifically, I strongly believe that, if we rely on a very careful reading of the Homeric text itself, Hector's attitude in the passage in question is not

8. The two passages from Aristotle's *Poetics* quoted in this paper are translated by Fyfe 1932.

9. Arist. *Po.* 1452a 22-23.

10. Erbse (ed.) 1969, B 156; cf. Nagy 1997, 103-104.

11. The translation is my own.

12. Hom. *Il.* 3.373-375.

obscure.[13] In fact, there are very strong indications that we are facing a specific ritual in this case. That ritual is activated within the context of the major Homeric technique of "reversal", at a time when the destruction of the Trojan army seems inevitable, something that would completely overturn Zeus' plan to honor Achilles for his mistreatment by Agamemnon.[14] Zeus planned to apply that honor by imposing a defeat upon the Greeks in the hands of the Trojans and of Hector particularly, as promised to Thetis earlier.[15] However, things after that promise seemed to go quite differently for some good literary reasons.[16] So the poet warns of the imminent defeat of the Trojans clearly:

Ὣς εἰπὼν {Νέστωρ}ὄτρυνε μένος καὶ θυμὸν ἑκάστου.
ἔνθά κεν αὖτε Τρῶες ἀρηϊφίλων ὑπ' Ἀχαιῶν
Ἴλιον εἰσανέβησαν ἀναλκείῃσι δαμέντες […][17]

So saying he {ie. Nestor} aroused the strength and spirit of every man. Then would the Trojans have been driven again by the Achaeans dear to Ares up to Ilios, vanquished in their weakness […]

Therefore, something real strong has to be done, in order for Zeus' plan to be implemented properly. According to the technique of the "reversal", that strong thing has to originate from the divine, being it either an immediate intervention by the gods or a divine indication given appropriately

13. Cf. the principle, attributed to Aristarchus, *Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν* (*elucidate Homer from Homer*), well known from antiquity (for a full discussion of that principle see Nünlist 2015).

14. Hom. *Il.* 1.53-244.

15. Hom. *Il.* 1.493-530; for Zeus' plan after Thetis' supplication and the correlated issues see, e.g., Latacz 2000, 181-194.

16. See Hom. *Il.* 2-6, where first Achilles' anger (*μῆνις*) or the *Achilleis* gradually turned by the poet to become the *Iliad* (see Latacz 2000, 113 and 155 ff.) and then Zeus' plan is implemented. Hence the poet conveys to the audience the sense of the whole story of the Trojan war, basically by the technique *in medias res* (cf. Genette 1972, 78-121; Schein 1997, 348-356).

17. Hom. *Il.* 6.72-74.

to humans.[18] The latter is exactly what happens next in our passage, which has the characteristics of a ritual. In fact the steps of that ritual are presented one by one by the poet:

1st Step: Helenus, the best of the augurs and Hector's brother, rushes to Hector and Aeneas, i.e. the best Trojan warriors, and reveals to them what they must do, in order to avoid the complete defeat of the army. Undoubtedly what the augur says is not just an opinion or a proposal of his own but an expression of the will of the divine.[19] Hence there is no chance for a mortal person, even if that person is the leader of the army and the heir of the Trojan throne, to reject or even ignore it. The syntactic form used here by the poet recalls the one we saw above in the example from a characteristic "reversal" I gave, making in this way clear that we are dealing with the same technique. Accordingly we read:

[…]εἰ μὴ ἄρ' Αἰνείᾳ τε καὶ Ἕκτορι εἶπε παραστὰς 75
Πριαμίδης Ἕλενος, οἰωνοπόλων ὄχ' ἄριστος·[20]

[…] had not the son of Priam, Helenus, far the best of augurs, come up to Aeneas and Hector, and said to them

2nd Step: According to the augur, the two greatest Trojan warriors must first animate their soldiers, in order for the latter to stay steadfastly against the Greeks:

Αἰνεία τε καὶ Ἕκτορ, ἐπεὶ πόνος ὔμμι μάλιστα
Τρώων καὶ Λυκίων ἐγκέκλιται, οὕνεκ' ἄριστοι
πᾶσαν ἐπ' ἰθύν ἐστε μάχεσθαί τε φρονέειν τε,
στῆτ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ λαὸν ἐρυκάκετε πρὸ πυλάων 80

18. The aforementioned notion of *θεῖον* includes the gods themselves, but also priests, augurs, temples and rituals (Burkert 1993, 619 and 634).

19. Burkert 1993, 248; cf. Strittmatter 1925, 84, where he uses the verd "commands" to describe the kind of communication the augur had with Hector in these verses.

20. Hom. *Il.* 6.75-76.

πάντῃ ἐποιχόμενοι πρὶν αὖτ' ἐν χερσὶ γυναικῶν
φεύγοντας πεσέειν, δηΐοισι δὲ χάρμα γενέσθαι.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεί κε φάλαγγας ἐποτρύνητον ἁπάσας,
ἡμεῖς μὲν Δαναοῖσι μαχησόμεθ' αὖθι μένοντες,
καὶ μάλα τειρόμενοί περ· ἀναγκαίη γὰρ ἐπείγει·[…] 85

Aeneas and Hector, seeing that upon you above all others rests the war-toil of Trojans and Lycians, for that in every undertaking ye are the best both in war and in counsel, hold ye your ground, and go ye this way and that throughout the host and keep them back before the gates, or ever in flight they fling themselves in their women's arms, and be made a joy to their foemen. But when ye have aroused all our battalions, we verily will abide here and fight against the Danaans, sore wearied though we be, for necessity weighs hard upon us;[…]

3rd Step: Then Hector, the leader of the army himself, must go to Troy. In the threatened city, the augur goes on, the leader of the army will meet the queen, that is, the head of the women:

[...]Ἕκτορ ἀτὰρ σὺ πόλιν δὲ μετέρχεο, εἰπὲ δ' ἔπειτα
μητέρι σῇ καὶ ἐμῇ· […][21]

[…]but do thou, Hector, go thy way to the cityand speak there to her that is thy mother and mine; […]

What is implied here is the exact correspondence between Hector and Hecuba. So the leader of the army himself should meet the head of the women of Troy herself. We understand that it is absolutely crucial for those very persons and not some representatives of theirs to communicate with each other directly.

4th Step: The queen, in her turn, will gather the aged wives and all together will head to the temple of Athena in the citadel:

21. Hom. *Il.* 6.86-87a.

[…] ἥ δὲ ξυνάγουσα γεραιὰς
νηὸν Ἀθηναίης γλαυκώπιδος ἐν πόλει ἄκρῃ […][22]

[…] let her gather the aged wives to the temple of flashing-eyed Athene in the citadel […]

In this way the aforementioned correspondence between Hector and Hecuba, is enriched with the correspondence between the soldiers and the women of Troy. The latter are represented in this case by the aged wifes. Thus we have on the one hand the army and on the other the weakest part of the population, i.e. the women and accordingly the children. The old men are not mentioned, since Athene was the protector of the women particularly and their children accordingly.[23] Besides it would be somehow weird to make a prayer for the old men when the children and their mothers are in danger. Of course old men really mattered in the city, but the point here is different. The ritual concerns only the women and not the men in grounds that within the salvation of the women and childern lie the salvation of the city as a whole.

5th Step: Hecuba will open the temple of Athene and offer the goddess the most beautiful, precious, and dearest to herself robe she possesses in the palace:

[…] οἴξασα κληῖδι θύρας ἱεροῖο δόμοιο
πέπλον, ὅς οἱ δοκέει χαριέστατος ἠδὲ μέγιστος 90
εἶναι ἐνὶ μεγάρῳ καί οἱ πολὺ φίλτατος αὐτῇ,
θεῖναι Ἀθηναίης ἐπὶ γούνασιν ἠϋκόμοιο […][24]

[…]and when she has opened with the key the doors of the holy house, the robe that seemeth to her the fairest and amplest in her hall, and that

22. Hom. *Il.* 6.87b-88.

23. For the Athene as a protector of peaceful activities related to women see Burkert 1993, 302.

24. Hom. *Il.* 89-92.

is far dearest to her own self, this let her lay upon the knees of fair-haired Athene […]

What enhances here the sense of a ritual is the description of the robe. It has to be something really precious and dear, so that its loss would make the owner really unhuppy. That ritual recalls what we read in Herodotus' Histories in the case of the friendly relationship between king Amasis of Egypt and Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos.[25] The former, well known for his wisdom, advices the latter how to change his fate, in order to achieve a normal balance between successes and mischances, since the constant and unprecedented fortune of Polycrates portended, in Amasis' opinion, his complete disaster. In those grounds Amasis writes to his friend:

[…] φροντίσας τὸ ἂν εὕρῃς ἐόν τοι πλείστου ἄξιον καὶ ἐπ' ᾧ σὺ ἀπολομένῳ μάλιστα τὴν ψυχὴν ἀλγήσεις, τοῦτο ἀπόβαλε οὕτω ὅκως μηκέτι ἥξει ἐς ἀνθρώπους. ἢν τε μὴ ἐναλλὰξ ἤδη τὠπὸ τούτου αἱ εὐτυχίαι τοι τῇσι πάθησι προσπίπτωσι, τρόπῳ τῷ ἐξ ἐμεῦ ὑποκειμένῳ ἀκέο.[26]

[…] consider what you hold most precious and what you will be sorriest to lose, and cast it away so that it shall never again be seen among men; then, if after this the successes that come to you are not mixed with mischances, strive to mend the matter as I have counselled you.[27]

Obviously the key-point here is the preciousness of the object, an element that would cause sorriness to the possessor by its loss. It looks like a fair cost paid for the change of fate. In the case of Amasis it was wisdom that dictated what should be done, while in the case of Hector it was a reliable augur who did so. What we observe in both cases is on the one hand that

25. For that famous history of Polycrates' ring see Hdt. 3.39.1 ff. Finally Polycrates was not able to change his fate, since his precious ring, thrown into the see by his servants, returned to his palace and, accordingly, to himself in the belly of a fish prepared for him by his cook. After that Amasis abandoned Polycrates, because he became sure that his ex-friend would face a total disaster, which was really the case in the end. See Asheri et al. 2007, 40.1[n] ff.

26. Hdt. 3.40.4

27. Translated by Godley 1920.

the line between Egyptian wisdom and a real ritual is of course obscure and on the other hand that the connection between material goods and human fate was a belief spread around the Mediterranean world of the time. Noteworthy here is also the fact that Amasis proved to be right. Hence the implication is that those things should be taken very seriously by people, otherwise a complete disaster would lie upon their heads.

6th Step: After the offer of the precious robe Hecuba has to vow to Athene:

[…] καί οἱ ὑποσχέσθαι δυοκαίδεκα βοῦς ἐνὶ νηῷ
ἥνις ἠκέστας ἱερευσέμεν […][28]

[…] and vow to her that she will sacrifice in her temple twelve sleek
heifers that have not felt the goad […]

Apparently the ritual is now more than clear, since the sacrifice of animals was a common place at that time. Moreover the choice of the twelve heifers that had not been used for any work somehow corresponds to the virginity of Athene and makes the whole vowed sacrifice a really special one.[29]

7th Step: Finally, Hecuba will beg Athene to save the women and children of Troy from Diomedes:

[…]αἴ κ' ἐλεήσῃ
ἄστύ τε καὶ Τρώων ἀλόχους καὶ νήπια τέκνα, 95
ὥς κεν Τυδέος υἱὸν ἀπόσχῃ Ἰλίου ἱρῆς,
ἄγριον αἰχμητὴν κρατερὸν μήστωρα φόβοιο,
ὅν δὴ ἐγὼ κάρτιστον Ἀχαιῶν φημι γενέσθαι.
οὐδ' Ἀχιλῆά ποθ' ὧδέ γ' ἐδείδιμεν ὄρχαμον ἀνδρῶν,
ὅν πέρ φασι θεᾶς ἐξέμμεναι· ἀλλ' ὅδε λίην 100

28. Hom. *Il.* 6.93-94a.

29. For all that see Kirk 1990, 6.93-94[n], where the use of the number twelve is explained in the grounds of a usual choice for the poet to express quantity; see also Burkert 1993, 136 and 202; cf. idem 1983, 3 about the relationship between *homo necans* and *homo religiosus*.

μαίνεται, οὐδέ τίς οἱ δύναται μένος ἰσοφαρίζειν.[30]

[…] *if she will have compassion on the city and the Trojan's wives and their little children; in hope she may hold back from sacred Ilios the son of Tydeus, that savage spearman, a mighty deviser of rout, who has verily, meseems, proved himself the mightiest of the Achaeans. Not even Achilles did we ever fear on this wise, that leader of men,who, they say, is born of a goddess; nay this man rageth beyond all measure, and no one can vie with him in might.*

In that passage the reason of the ritual is revealed to Athene. The army is helpful against Diomedes, who seemed to have surpassed even Achilles in destructive power. Hence only the goddess and not the army could save the women and children of Troy. The verses 98-101 consist of a personal comment Helenus addressed to Hector and Aeneas and is not of course part of the official ritual. That's why neither Hector, when he informs his mother of her part in the ritual, nor Theano, the priestess of Athene in Troy, mentioned those words.[31]

Indeed, everything is done according to the instructions of the augur. In the temple of Athene, however, the priestess Theano and not Hecuba is the one who *ex officio* opens the temple, offers the precious robe to the goddess, makes the vow about the sacrifice, and asks, somehow bidding, for the death of Diomedes, which though nobody asked for. [32] The reason why the death of Diomedes is not asked for by the augur is probably because the poet and his audience know clearly from the tradition that Diomedes would not be killed in the Trojan war.[33] That actually strengthens my argument about the ritual, because the augur organizes it as the

30. Hom. *Il.*6. 94b-101

31. See Hom. *Il.* 6.269-278 and 305-310.

32. See Hom. *Il.* 6.286-310; Kirk (ed.) 1990, 6.305-6^{n} and 307-10^{n}; cf. ibid. 311-12^{n}; for the typical vocabulary of a sacrifice, which is also used in the scene with Theano here (6.297-311), see Kitts 2002, 28; for the alleged problem caused by the epithet *ῥυσίπτολι* (savior of the city) addressed to Athene by Theano in verse 305 see Strittmatter 1925, 86-87.

33. See Kakridis 1971, 66; cf. Combellack 1944, especially pp. 213 and 241-242, for

last means to prevent the defeat of the Trojans in the hands of Diomedes, knowing that the death of that hero was out of question. So the whole ritual is not utopian and can achieve its aim. Of course there is the question why Theano asked for it. The answer could be that Hector's words related to Diomedes were not conveyed to the priestess by Hecuba exactly as the queen heard them by her son.[34] In any case I do not believe that this is a serious reason for a scholar to start arguing about alleged inconsistencies in the poem or, even worse, to reject those verses along with the verse 311, where Athene, as expected, denies to consent to the death of Diomedes.[35] That does not mean that the other part of the prayer related to the salvation of the women and children of Troy for the time being was not accepted. Besides in this way the poet miraculously satisfies both the traditional facts and the salvation of the Trojans for the time being.

The result of the ritual is finally the reversal of the course of the events, with the Trojans defeating the Greeks, when Hector returns to the battle accompanied by Paris.[36] So, the ritual really worked in the end. Theano's prayer, of course, was not completely fulfilled, since it was not included in Helenus' instructions, but was rather expressed by the priestess' excessive zeal or resulted from a potential misunderstanding between her and Hecuba. However, the mediation of Theano, who was also not included in the augur's instructions, should probably be taken for granted, since she was the priestess of Athene, and therefore her presence does not cause any problem.

Hector's relationship with the heroic tradition, which is well established in the *Iliad*; cf. also Trail 1990, 303; De Jong 1997, 324-325.

34. In the verses 6.286-296 we see Hecuba doing exactly what Hector asked her to do except for conveying to Theano the exact words of the prayer. So the queen probably described to Theano what should be done and asked for, but concerning Diomedes she just mentioned the name of the threat and nothing more. For Homer's techniques see Latacz 2000, 133; De Jong 1997.

35. About Aristarchus' rather unnecessary rejection of the verse 311 see Kirk (ed.) 1990, 311-12^{n}; cf. Farron 1979, 23-24.

36. See Hom. *Il.* 7.1 ff.

In conclusion, Hector's withdrawal from the battle and his entering Troy in a very critical moment for his army is neither an inconsistency in portraying this Trojan hero nor an action that a real character would never do. It is rather a ritual with concrete steps, wich Hector, as anybody else in his position, could not reject. The situation on the battlefield required, according to the augur, the personal presence and official statement of the army leader himself to the head of the women of Troy herself, namely the queen, that the army could not in that case help these women and their children. Thus, all that remains is for this latter leader, in her turn, to proceed with the process of praying to goddess Athene to save the women and their children. Consequently this is indeed achieved. Athene would not accept representatives at any step of such a communication procedure between human and divine.[37] Thus, it cannot be argued that all this is done simply for Hector to go to Troy and take part in the moving scene with Andromache and their son. This scene could take place at the end of this or the next day, when the Trojan army and Hector himself entered the city.

In fact, Homer with that particular choice is completely consistent with his general technique. He gives a variety to the action, honors Diomedes, respects the tradition, strengthens the humanity that pervades the whole *Iliad* despite the endless battles, saves the Trojans, so that the plan of Zeus can be implemented and all this within the context of the technique of "reversal", which makes the poet fascinating. Ultimately, it is clear that the city is not only its army but also its women and children; and everyone has power, either through arms or through rituals.[38]

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37. Of course a ritual is always a communication procedure between the members of a specific human society too, but that is beyond the scope of this paper (see BURKERT 1983, 24-25; cf. KITTS 2002, 23 and 30).

38. Cf. FARRON 1979, 30-31, where he misses the connecting role of the Trojan women to the divine.

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Anton Bierl

NIOBE: A MYTHICAL EXAMPLE AND EMBLEM OF A HUMAN / NON-HUMAN MOTHER IN MOURNING A NEW READING OF *ILIAD* 24.599-620 AND MODERN INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FIGURE

Introduction

The last rhapsody of the *Iliad* is usually regarded as an expression of humanity and human compassion.[1] Supposedly, the *Iliad* represents the beginning of the Western humanist tradition of thought that is so intimately tied to Christian values.

As I showed in another contribution,[2] in an epic poem of monumental size that stretches over 15693 verses, it is more appropriate to focus exclusively on narrative progression and narrative procedures than on character. In doing so, one quickly realizes that even the last rhapsody of the extensive oral tradition is permeated with inner tensions and fissures. Achilles is responsible for the tremendous expansion of a narration gradually grown to this enormous extent over centuries. This happens through ambivalences, cracks, and inconsistencies in Achilles' character drawing, which does not correspond to a notion of human compassion, of will for conflict resolution, of Stoic-Christian values of peace of mind, balance, empathy, or even of today's ideas of political correctness. These features are reflected especially in Achilles' use of mocking, irritating, and testing

1. The first part of this paper is largely taken form Bierl 2019, 49-52 (extremely shortened for the introduction) and 65-67. On the humanist message of *Iliad* 24, see Segal 1971, 60; Macleod 1982, 16; Crotty 1994, 3-4; on *eleos* and pity in *Iliad* 24, see Crotty 1994, 3-23; Kim 2000; Most 2003; Grethlein 2006, 291-302; on the whole rhapsody Ω, see the comments of Ameis - Hentze 1886, 91-141; Macleod 1982; Richardson 1993, 272-361; Brügger 2017.

2. Bierl 2019.

in his speech.[3] At the same time, his inner defensiveness becomes palpable. He really does not want to let the other person's concern get to him and would prefer not to assume responsibility for his actions. All this leads to delay and retardation of the entire narrative of the *Iliad*, in particular of the last rhapsody.[4] We can therefore also see from a metanarrative perspective how the Homeric narrative stretches the *lytra*, the release (*lysis*) of Hector's corpse, which would be expected to take place quickly as a punctual event, in a highly artificial manner.[5]

Moreover, the restitution of Hector's body only partially coincides with the *lysis* of the plot entanglements and thus with a satisfactory ending. Achilles proves to be an instance that delays the *lysis* by means of retardation and threatens to put it in danger. His language of agonistic trumping and flyting inevitably leads to tensions that stand in the way of a peaceful settlement as well as prevent a swift and harmonious end. Therefore, a main feature of the *Iliad* is the fact that everything remains in limbo for a long time. In short, the *Iliad* needs the problematic Achilles as he is. Narrative meaning is also created through contrasting foils.[6]

Niobe in *Iliad* 24

In the Niobe *paradeigma*, these tendencies of tension and retardation go on even after the corpse has been ransomed. At the same time, the oral tradition refers to its specific mode of making in a metanarrative manner. Let us first have a look at the text (*Iliad* 24.599-620):

3. On Achilles' language, see Martin 1989, 206-239. On retardation in the *Iliad,* see also Grethlein 2006, 269-280, 306.

4. See also Martin 1989, 146-239; Grethlein 2006, 269-280, 306.

5. On an aesthetics of expansion, see Martin 1989, 146-239. The *Hektoros lytra,* or *lytra* for short, that is the song of the successful "solution or ransom of Hector's corpse" from Achilles, can be brought together with Aristotle's conceptualization of a satisfactory dramatic ending. In the 18th chapter of his *Poetics*, in which tragedy is repeatedly related to the Homeric epic, Aristotle speaks of the suspense of an action, the *desis,* the tying of the knot, the *peripeteia*, and the *lysis*, the solution at the end (1455b24-29). See Bierl 2019, esp. 51.

6. On this, see Roeder 2018.

υἱὸς μὲν δή τοι λέλυται γέρον ὡς ἐκέλευες,
κεῖται δ' ἐν λεχέεσσ'· ἅμα δ' ἠοῖ φαινομένηφιν (600)
ὄψεαι αὐτὸς ἄγων· νῦν δὲ μνησώμεθα δόρπου.
καὶ γάρ τ' ἠΰκομος Νιόβη ἐμνήσατο σίτου,
τῇ περ δώδεκα παῖδες ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ὄλοντο
ἓξ μὲν θυγατέρες, ἓξ δ' υἱέες ἡβώοντες.
τοὺς μὲν Ἀπόλλων πέφνεν ἀπ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο (605)
χωόμενος Νιόβῃ, τὰς δ' Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα,
οὕνεκ' ἄρα Λητοῖ ἰσάσκετο καλλιπαρῄῳ·
φῆ δοιὼ τεκέειν, ἣ δ' αὐτὴ γείνατο πολλούς·
τὼ δ' ἄρα καὶ δοιώ περ ἐόντ' ἀπὸ πάντας ὄλεσσαν.
οἳ μὲν ἄρ' ἐννῆμαρ κέατ' ἐν φόνῳ, οὐδέ τις ἦεν (610)
κατθάψαι, λαοὺς δὲ λίθους ποίησε Κρονίων·
τοὺς δ' ἄρα τῇ δεκάτῃ θάψαν θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες.
ἣ δ' ἄρα σίτου μνήσατ', ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα.
νῦν δέ που ἐν πέτρῃσιν ἐν οὔρεσιν οἰοπόλοισιν
ἐν Σιπύλῳ, ὅθι φασὶ θεάων ἔμμεναι εὐνὰς (615)
νυμφάων, αἵ τ' ἀμφ' Ἀκελήσιον ἐρρώσαντο,
ἔνθα λίθος περ ἐοῦσα θεῶν ἐκ κήδεα πέσσει.
ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ καὶ νῶϊ μεδώμεθα δῖε γεραιὲ
σίτου· ἔπειτά κεν αὖτε φίλον παῖδα κλαίοισθα
Ἴλιον εἰσαγαγών· πολυδάκρυτος δέ τοι ἔσται. (620)

Your son is given back to you, aged sir, as you asked it.
He lies on a bier. When dawn shows you yourself shall see him (600)
as you take him away. Now you and I must remember our supper.
For even Niobe, she of the lovely tresses, remembered
To eat, whose twelve children were destroyed in her palace,
six daughters, and six sons in the pride of their youth, whom Apollo
killed with arrows from his silver bow, being angered (605)
with Niobe, and shaft-showering Artemis killed the daughters;
because Niobe likened herself to Leto of the fair colouring
and said Leto had borne only two, she herself had borne many;

but the two, though they were only two, destroyed all those others.
Nine days long they lay in their blood, nor was there anyone (610)
to bury them, for the son of Kronos made stones out of
the people; but on the tenth day the Uranian gods buried them.
But she remembered to eat when she was worn out with weeping.
And now somewhere among the rocks, in the lonely mountains,
in Sipylos, where they say is the resting place of the goddesses (615)
who are nymphs, and dance beside the waters of Akelesios,
there, stone still, she broods on the sorrows that the gods gave her.
Come then, we also, aged magnificent sir, must remember
to eat, and afterwards you may take your beloved son back
to Ilion, and mourn for him; and he will be much lamented. (620)

trans. Lattimore 2011/1951
(taken from the Chicago Homer, slightly adjusted)

After Achilles has prepared the corpse for release in the background – he wanted to withdraw Priam's gaze in order not to revive the conflict – Achilles returns and utters: *υἱὸς μὲν δή τοι λέλυται* (599). Priam has achieved his goal of ransoming Hector. The corpse is already lying on the chariot, ready to leave. Since it is night, Achilles suggests that they could finally remember to eat (600-601).[7] Achilles thus again enforces a postponement. Both he and Priam have not really eaten for days in their excessive mourning.[8] Achilles tries to persuade Priam to share a meal[9] despite his grief with a lengthy story, the apparently improvised Niobe *paradeigma* (602-617).[10]

7. On the motif of remembering, see Kim 2000, 144-145.

8. On the food issue, see Brügger 2017, 13 *ad* 3; only at the meal before the competitive games did Achilles reluctantly participate (*Iliad* 23.48) and he ate a little just before Priam arrived (475); before that he refused to eat (19.205-210; see also 19.155-156, 305-308, 319-321, 344-346); see Coray 2016, 9-98 *ad* 19.203-214. On the particular relevance of this problem for Achilles as the speaker, see Schmitz 2001, 147-149.

9. See Lentini 2006, 137-140 with reference to *Iliad* 19 and *Odyssey* 7.

10. See Brügger 2017, 222-225 *ad* 599-620; on this Lohmann 1970, 12-13 (with older literature in n. 1); Seaford 1994, 174-175; Alden 2000, 26-29; Minchin 2001, 191, 194-195; Schmitz 2001; Heath 2005, 156-166.

The speech (599-620), which features ring composition on multiple levels, on the one hand continues the rhetoric of consolation, and on the other hand is used by Achilles to exhort and to persuade Priam to finally dine with him. Achilles is obviously driven by the concern that "Priam might again decline the invitation" to eat.[11] At the same time, Achilles continues his strategy of light and covert mockery, provocation, as well as the relativization of his deed. Niobe is used as a peculiarly oblique example for Priam, especially since her model certainly appears as not worthy of imitation, at least as far as her final petrification is concerned. The paradigm works with numerous parallels and contrasts that relate, more or less clearly, to Priam and Achilles in the situation at hand.

The textual tradition here makes use of a particularly fruitful "work on myth" ("Arbeit am Mythos"),[12] which results in numerous references to both figures.[13] In myth, of course, all variants may already be laid out as multiforms,[14] to which one recurs according to the situation.[15] As in a semiotically and symbolically charged knot of meanings, the previously unbridgeable distance is overcome and transferred into potential contact zones. Thus, the opponents enter into interaction in paradoxical and unexpected overlaps. The complex relationship between them is further negotiated via ambivalent and polymorphous lines of connection. Myth as paradigm and in some respects as *ainos*,[16] referring to deeper layers of meaning through the use of symbolization, connects diverse discourses and collapses antinomies. Oppositions and dichotomies stand side by side and interact dynamically: exhortation and consolation, mockery and encourage-

11. Brügger 2017, 223.

12. Blumenberg 1985.

13. See Willcock 1977, also Willcock 1964, 141-142.

14. See Nagy 1996a, 113-146.

15. On the reconstruction of a gradual evolution of the Niobe example in successive steps of mutual adaptations, which are based on the "reverberation and echo-effect between the original tale, whichever it was, and its parallel" (142), see Lang 1983, on the Niobe *paradeigma*, 143-147.

16. See Nagy 1990, 196-198; Nagy 2013, 65-66.

ment, provocation and reconciliation, soul in terms of expressing inner harshness and body in physical terms of necessary nourishment, perpetuation of grief and termination of suffering, Thebes in mainland Greece and Lydia in Asia Minor, thus Hellas and a country allied with Troy, Tantalids and Olympians, gods and mortals, woman and man as models, petrification and movement, analeptic and proleptic moments, rigidity and flexibility. Achilles' mythic exemplum seems particularly bizarre and alienating as it defies gender boundaries. For Priam is paralleled with the female figure Niobe, who boastfully exalts herself above a divine mother. Achilles, on the other hand, has indeed, to some extent, some female aspects as an excessive lover and bridegroom and breeds almost maternal concerns, especially toward Patroclus, his alter ego.[17] Moreover, he is dearly beloved by his mother Thetis. At the same time, Priam's previous boasting about the large number of his sons directed at the only child Achilles (493-498, and the rebuke 538-546) is an indirect offence against Apollo, since Peleus' son is a mirror image of the god of the ephebes, who in turn functions as his divine model. In battle, Achilles has been at bitter enmity with him, but the association with Apollo points to Achilles' future status as a cult hero who has a close cultic relationship with Apollo. Achilles himself, as Apollo's stand-in or ritual substitute, manifested as the murderer of numerous sons of Priam's. Antagonism in myth is accompanied by close association and collaboration in cult.[18]

In addition, the scene not only represents a contact zone on a narrative level in symbolic terms, but also a discourse of and about violence, boundaries, and frontiers in the internal framework of the speech acts of the heroic figures. To compare Priam with Niobe, the proud mother who unconsciously transgresses the uncertain and ambiguous demarcation line

17. See Nagy 2013, 98-99, 136-138, 146-168.

18. On the god-man antagonism, see Nagy 1979, 121; Nagy 2013, 333-334; specifically on Achilles-Apollo, see Brügger 1975, esp. 19; Nagy 1979, 143; Nagy 2013, 114, 142-144; Bierl 2015, 199 (§ 52). On the relevance of the Niobe paradigm in this respect, see Rabel 1990.

between humans, heroes, and gods – a notorious theme in the *Iliad* – represents a tremendous act of provocation, aggression, and denigration via speech. Achilles unmasks and taunts his *xenos* as a woman and as a boastful transgressor, who will turn into stone in her ultimate grief over the loss of her children. It is a speech act that threatens the guest's integrity, thus constitutes hardly veiled violence. It means a scandal, a *skandalon*, a 'trap or snare laid for an enemy' (*LSJ*); in metaphorical terms, Niobe's final metamorphosis coincides with the implied meaning of a 'stumbling block' that prevents the agreement just reached. In René Girard's mimetic theory, the *skandalon* plays a big role.[19] The model as medium of desire is a scandal, as it is an attractive obstacle that cannot be reached or even overcome. In triangulation the subject of desire imitates the model for an imagined object of their rivalry. *Skazein* means to 'limp', the subject is like a limping person who constantly attempts to merge with his shadow without ever succeeding, missing his self. The stumbling and limping, thus the scandal as an obstacle and trap with the goal to make one stumble (*skandalizein*), is an emblem for a vertiginous void of strife and for the grotesque agonistic double-bind between the frustration, possibility, and hope to reach the object of desire. This applies to the mimetic rivalry between Niobe and Leto. But Niobe's fatal error lies in likening herself to a goddess. Leto becomes the stumbling block, the obstacle and trap in Niobe's desire to be equal to her (Λητοῖ ἰσάσκετο, 607) as far as maternity, female fertility, and beauty – Leto has the epithet 'beautiful-cheeked' (Λητοῖ … καλλιπαρῄῳ, 607) – are concerned. In her unwitty mimetic rivalry, Niobe even boasts about outdoing Leto in the number of children (608). The divine model becomes Niobe's scandal to rival with the goddess. Leto strikes back and the massacre of the children grotesquely multiplies the scandal. In her desperate mourning, Niobe finally turns herself into the rock, so to speak into the literal concretization of the scandal.

19. See e.g. Girard 1977; Girard 1984; Girard 2014.

The stone, the result of Niobe's petrification, serves also as a way for Achilles to establish a firm boundary between himself and Priam. Achilles' hardly masked and up to now barley suppressed aggression could break out into open violence, while the speaker openly sides with his divine model Apollo, the terrible god who unexpectedly performs a most violent and bloody attack on the 'bare' (Benjamin) or 'nude' lives (Agamben)[20] of Niobe's innocent sons in order to take revenge for his mother Leto in a vicarious form. Together with his sister Artemis, they both shoot their deadly arrows from afar. The Greek hero aligns with his divine model Apollo who has fought against him by siding with the Trojans and just threatened to actively prevent Achilles from further exerting violence on Hector's body. As the best of the Achaeans feels already close to his own death, he anticipates his status a cult hero and his ensuing link with Apollo. Thus, in his illocutionary speech act of dire threat of violence aimed at the perlocutionary effect of intimidating and humiliating his opposite, Achilles shifts into the role of the god. In the logic of the *ainos,* Priam is associated with Niobe, Thetis thus stands in for Leto, who is offended given the imminent death of her son, but Achilles is still able to strike back. He has killed numerous of Priam's sons, last but not least Hector. He could even now kill Priam himself, but as Priam's mourning over the death of his sons has stiffened him to stone, which produced an ambiguous threshold between them, Achilles can only allude to his potential of open violence. In his "Critique of Violence" (1921) Walter Benjamin made the Greek mythic figure Niobe his example of mythic violence. We will come back to his idiosyncratic reading that focuses on fate, the vague threshold which Niobe unconsciously challenges.[21] Therefore, in a terrible consequence, she only creates, establishes, and then affirms the boundary between humans and gods as the mythic law, symbolized by the stone she has turned into. She feels massive sorrow for having breached the law. Through her growing guilt and her

20. Agamben 1998; Benjamin 1921.

21. On a criticism from the perspective of structuralism of the Paris school around Vernant, see Ahmadi 2015.

assumption of responsibility for this deed she only stiffens and turns into the stone that marks the boundary. By doing so Niobe eternally confirms the terrible and magical spell of a law deeply interwoven with violence that solely aims at the bare life of the human existence. Fate works like a trap – we have again the *skandalon* – that damns Niobe and all later human beings to get entangled in its fatal mechanism which Benjamin postulates. To some extent, even Achilles senses the threat of this ambiguous boundary. At the beginning of *Iliad* 24, Apollo was close to acting against him. But at the same time, Achilles feels now close to the antagonistic god. He yields to the threats of the Olympians. He obeys Thetis and her appeals to give up his furor of revenge and to permit the release of Hector's corpse. Despite some instances where his violence could break out again and his offensive speech strategies are barely hidden,[22] Achilles apparently has overcome his trauma and invites Priam in his inner rigidification to at least interrupt his dire mourning to have a common meal as Niobe has done. Psychic stiffness can temporarily relent and turn into an initial human understanding with the enemy. The act of preparing the release of the arch-enemy's body triggers in him some empathy and draws him to a partial return to compassion (*eleos*) with Hector's father. He feels some urge to ritually seal the agreement and to offer some *xenia*. Achilles' own inner petrification merely begins to melt, but he still feels an inner resistance against the release through ransom as he was compelled to do so by others. Priam remains a *skandalon* for Achilles, a literal 'stumbling block' as Hector's old father appeared on the threshold of his tent. He could have 'stumbled' over this emblem of inner rigidity equal and substantiated to iron[23] or even stone. Both have a common experience of trauma and grief. Achilles did everything to keep Priam from an outbreak of suppressed violence by hiding the corpse from his view. However, the threshold between gods and humans remains ambiguous for Achilles too so that they must cooperate in negotiating the

22. See Bierl 2019.

23. See *Iliad* 24.205 and 521 with Achilles' reproach towards Priam of having a heart of iron (*σιδήρειόν νύ τοι ἦτορ*).

not easily manageable barrier of violence. He works hard not to fall into the trap. At the same time, he challenges the hazy boundary, as he feels superior to Priam, amongst other things due to his divine descendance. Through his provocative speech acts Achilles establishes a new barrier between them. As Achilles insists via the example of Niobe who will return home after the meal and suffer petrification on Mt. Sipylos, the deep grief of Priam will go on forever and never cease, whereas he, conscious of his imminent death, already faces a more serene future as a cult hero.

We come back to the net of references forwards and backwards on the level of the narration. Niobe's petrifaction is located on Mt. Sipylos in Lydia (614-617), which roughly corresponds to Maionia and belongs to the Trojan sphere of influence in Asia Minor. Niobe's boasting of having given birth to numerous children (608) compared to Leto having just twins also refers to Priam and his notorious fifty sons, while Peleus has only one son, Achilles, as mentioned earlier (493-498, and the rebuke 538-546). As seen, the implicit threat is that Apollo, as Leto's son, and respectively Achilles, who is also descended from a goddess and stands in a relationship of both antagonism and similarity to the god of ephebes,[24] could punish Priam and do him harm. Indeed, he already put the threat of violence into practice, for Achilles himself had killed numerous sons of Priam's in battle, most notably Hector, the single son and protector of Troy, for whom Priam grieves so much (499-501). In a comparable manner, Leto's powerful divine descendants Artemis and Apollo struck down all twelve children of Niobe, six daughters and six sons respectively, with their arrows. The fact that they had to lie in blood for nine days afterwards (610) refers to the postponement of the solution, the ransom of Hector's body, whose funeral is thereby delayed for just as long.[25] Patroclus' postponed burial and particularly the truce of nine days to organize Hector's funeral (664, 784), too, are related to this. In addition, Achilles reports that no one could bury the

24. See above note 18 (202).

25. See *Iliad* 24.107-108; on twelve days with the three days of dragging of Hector's corpse included, see Brügger 2017, 29 *ad* 31.

dead (610-611) because Zeus turned the population into stone (611). The "*ad hoc* invention" by "transfer of motifs",[26] facilitated by a folk etymology (*laos*, people' from *laas*, 'stone'), from the canonical petrification of Niobe, which will be mentioned in a moment (617) – the horror of the inhabitants witnessing the appalling deed of divine violence, transfigured them into stone, – seems apologetic: as he insinuates, the release of Hector's corpse, the precondition of his burial, was simply impossible, since Achilles, like all those involved, was himself immobilized and therefore unable to react as a human being in the extreme psychological situation, i.e. his furor of revenge. The doubling of the petrification on the side of the people also alludes to the contagious aspect of Niobe's psychic frozen state. It even produces an effect upon the audience, the recipients of the horrific mythic paradigms narrated in direct speech. By listening to the events of terror, they become paralyzed with shock. On the tenth day, the Olympians finally buried Niobe's children (612). In our case, the gods in like manner took the actual initiative by burying Hector (23-76). Just as the Niobids lay long in the blood of murder (611), so too was Hector's dead body repeatedly desecrated and brutally disfigured by Achilles and laid unburied in Achilles' tent, who likewise froze in his wrath. Perpetrator and victim, the avenger and the father deprived of his son, as well as the community that surrounds them, are united in the face of the stark situation in the state of psychological, inner rigidification. In addition to back-references, the passage also implies a prescriptive note regarding the conditions of the funeral ritual for Hector (660-667) soon to be negotiated.[27] However, despite the excessive grief expressed in lamentation and weeping, Niobe as a *mater dolorosa* remembered to eat (613) – unlike Priam as well as to some extent Achilles.[28] Finally, in the form of an aitiology, Niobe's petrification on Mt. Sipylos is mentioned, the result of which can still be seen today as a rock image (614-617) – one of Niobe's sons was also called Sipylos. Even now

26. Brügger 2017, 224-225.
27. See Marino 1999, 25-33.
28. On the myth, see Kakridis 1930; Willcock 1964; Lang 1983, 143-148.

Niobe feels the suffering (617). The water running down the rock was seen as her tears. Thus, Achilles argues that a pause in the lamentation should be granted to them both, Achilles and Priam (618-620). The respite leading to a further retardation is legitimate. Both Aristophanes and Aristarchus questioned the authenticity of lines 614-617, since the consoling appeal to Priam to take nourishment like Niobe, with the reference to her subsequent petrification due to insurmountable grief, takes on an almost absurd note.[29] As already emphasized, the ridiculous, provocative, and slightly mocking tone towards Priam fits very well with Achilles' overall attitude in rhapsody 24 of the *Iliad*. At the same time, the athetesis would remove a central element from the perfect ring-compositional structure,[30] while the ring structure also depicts the paradoxical entanglement of the opposing figures on the level of form.

Moreover, I think it has never been pointed out that the story of petrification is not only a "common mythological motif",[31] but also has metapoetic implications. As in the case of the Phaeacian ship turned to rock in *Odyssey* 13.163, it is about the demarcation of a later, more rigid tradition of transmission and narration,[32] which is entrusted to scripture, from previous more fluid forms of oral textualizations.[33] The narration thus refers to its oral preforms of fluidity. Petrification in this sense also implies that the Homeric text no longer refers to forms of lamentation in vivid songs but mentions instances of grief only through reports in summary. With the help of the contrasting foil of petrification, which highlights a strict

29. In favor of an athetesis, see Kakridis 1930; Willcock 1964; Pearce 2008 (with a detailed analysis); Brügger 2017, 225 defends the authenticity of the verses particularly based on the argument of the continuation of the mourning and the reference in 639 to 617 as well as on the allusions of later poets to 614-617; see also Richardson 1993, 340-341.

30. See Brügger 2017, 222-223; on a different model of ring composition without 614-617, see Pearce 2008, 20.

31. See Brügger 2017, 224 with examples; see *Iliad* 2.319 (the snake in Aulis) and *Odyssey* 13.163 (the ship of the Phaeacians).

32. Bierl 2020.

33. See Nagy's theory of an evolutionary textualization: inter alia Nagy 1996a, 107-206; Nagy 2009, 1-72; see Bierl 2015, 186-192 (§ 21-35) with further literature.

boundary, one advocates for the relatively fluid form to remain open.[34] In this specific case, the lamentation and mourning is presented accordingly in a mimetic and open narrative form of performance at the end of the *Iliad* (719-776), thus conveying to the audience the high degree of emotionality of the funeral and mourning ritual, which is anchored in a living choral culture. Only with the intense mourning scene of the *gooi*, which implements the ritualized solution as a mimetic performance of song, does the *Iliad* as a monumental epic find a truly satisfactory conclusion. A merely referenced weeping and lamentation told in the summary style, on the other hand, seems like stone, that is, like dead material that can no longer produce the ritual solution and reintegration. Since the *Iliad* is further delayed at this critical point, due the conclusion of the ransom of Hector's corpse, and only comes to an end with the three laments (719/725-775), it sets itself apart from a later tradition that no longer makes this possible. The petrification of Niobe is, as it were, at the same time the aitiology for the upcoming epic composed merely under the condition of literacy. After the *Iliad* the fluidity of the living narrative comes to its preliminary end. In the prehistory of diachronically permeable orality, on the other hand, epic consists of *goos* and song, which is later regulated and solidified in writing. The contrast is highlighted through the description of the lonely mountain area in Lydia near the city of Magnesia, where Niobe now can be seen transformed into a rock massif on Mt. Sipylos. The vivacious nymphs have their dwelling place there as well. Their mobility as a frolicking chorus dancing on the banks of the river Akelesios (615-616) is visibly presentified, as Achilles conjures the girls up in *enargeia* as if the scene were happening right before the audience's eye.[35] Their dancing movement in a

34. After a fruitful discussion of my webinar on 14 January 2022, Ahuvia Kahane exchanged an email with me on 16 January 2022 commenting on my remarks on poetic materiality. He noted: "Your comments also made me think that 'elemental' matter in Homer (stone, water, earth, fire) might be a more useful means of discussing both ontology and poetics ('applied metaphysics' – Lorrain Daston (e.g. DASTON 2000, esp. 3) in Homer than objects (shields or bows, etc. very popular these days, of course)."

35. On nymphs in the chorus, see, among others, *Odyssey* 6.122-124; Hes. *Th.* 129-130;

chorus is fused with the dynamic waves running down the river and clearly "represent a contrasting foil to the petrified Niobe's loneliness (614, 617)".[36] Perhaps Niobe's own link with music should be mentioned at this point. Her sister-in-law Aedon, wife of Amphion's twin brother Zethos and Pandareos' daughter, is particularly associated with song, music, and mourning. In Penelope's famous comparison with Aedon, Nightingale (*Odyssey* 19.518-523), her variable song functions as a *mise en abyme* and model of the Homeric song.[37] After Aedon's transformation into the nightingale, she modulates her sad melody in grief over the loss of her son Itylos, whom she has killed by mistake.[38] Niobe's husband and father of her children is Amphion, ruler of Thebes. Moreover, he is associated with the seven-stringed lyre. Like Orpheus, the model of the pre-Homeric epic, Amphion can set matter in motion with it, especially stones. Playfully, he could use the lyre to build the wall of Thebes with the seven gates. The instrument serves as musical accompaniment to the diachronically preceding lyrical basis of the epic. Niobe's petrification, which takes place in the East conceived as the Other, is thus the dissolution of the Greek cultural achievement. Movement or elasticity and the construction of a protective wall thus becomes solidification or rigidity and the return to dead material. In a sense, the scene anticipates the destruction of Troy and her walls,

h.Ven. 257-263; with ῥώομαι as here *h.Ven.* 261; on ῥώομαι for the dancing of the Muses, see Hes. *Th.* 8; Heath 2005, 161-162 regards the dance as a means of demarcation between gods and mortals; on the local river name Akelesios, see the apparatus in West's text *ad* 616 against the variant Ἀχελώιος inserted later in the manuscripts, which as one of the largest rivers in Greece (Acheloos) has, as it were, Panhellenic significance; see Brügger 2017, 229 *ad* 616; Macleod 1982, 141 *ad* 616 sees Acheloos as representative of every river.

36. Brügger 2017, 228 *ad* 614-617; on the "perceptual" aorist of ἐρρώσαντο, expressing "proximity" and "immediacy", literally meaning 'they perform a choral dance in wave-like movements' (*LfgrE*), see Bakker 2005, 136-153, esp. 138-139, 145-149.

37. See Nagy 1996b, 1-86.

38. According to Loraux 1990, 84-97, Aedon serves as another emblem of female mourning. Therefore, Loraux remarks that the audience of the *Odyssey* might have associated Aedon, and thus also Penelope, when she compared herself with Pandareos' daughter, with Niobe, another mother who can be held accountable for her children's death (88).

even those around the Greek ships (12.10-33). After the sad events in the homeland of her father Tantalus, who notoriously transgressed the boundary towards the gods as well, Niobe wandered from Thebes to Lydia and in her grief suffered a transformation into stone, a rock-image in the Sipylos mountains. There, still stone (*ἔνθα λίθος περ ἐοῦσα*, 617) – the expression takes up *ἐν πέτρῃσιν* (614) –, she even now must 'brood on and digest' (*πέσσει*, 617) 'the sorrows caused by the gods' (*θεῶν ἐκ κήδεα*, 617). The verb *πέσσειν*, sarcastically and on a colloquial basis, combines extreme grief with eating and the digestion. It implies heat for boiling or cooking so that things ripen and can be processed or decomposed from larger pieces or insoluble molecules into smaller ones which can subsequently be accessed by enzymes. Sorrow and trauma must be processed in the same way through psycho-social bereavement work. Despite her petrification, Niobe is not dead stone, but lives on in her suffering, accompanied by her tears and the waters on the mountain that run over or besides the surface of the solid rock so that over the millennia it is slowly eroded into boulders and pebbles.

If Priam were to stop eating altogether, he would truly die. With Achilles' appeal for a temporary return to life, he is in a sense trying to keep Priam from becoming completely petrified of suffering, alive yet inwardly dead. And yet, as Achilles makes it clear to him, Priam will have to digest and brood on it forever (639). Achilles' psychologically quite realistic reference to cooking and brooding (617), which metaphorically links ingestion of food and its digestion with grief and suffering, as well as the myth of Niobe's petrification, still does not lack a certain sarcasm and a mocking bitterness towards Priam. At the same time, Achilles again tries to push away his responsibility with an apparent consolation, now wanting to quickly find his way back to normal order.

When Achilles and Priam have really found their way back to life with food and drink, they finally recognize their commonality in suffering (629-632):

ἤτοι Δαρδανίδης Πρίαμος θαύμαζ' Ἀχιλῆα
ὅσσος ἔην οἷός τε· θεοῖσι γὰρ ἄντα ἐῴκει (630)
αὐτὰρ ὃ Δαρδανίδην Πρίαμον θαύμαζεν Ἀχιλλεὺς
εἰσορόων ὄψίν τ' ἀγαθὴν καὶ μῦθον ἀκούων.

Priam, son of Dardanos, gazed upon Achilleus, wondering,
at his size and beauty, for he seemed like an outright vision
of gods. Achilleus in turn gazed on Dardanian Priam
and wondered, as he saw his brave looks and listened to him talking.

trans. LATTIMORE 2011/1951

In the mutual admiration, one briefly recognizes the dignity of the other. Priam in particular now already assumes the attitude of veneration toward a figure to be transformed into a cult hero. Achilles, in his stature comparable to that of the gods, thus anticipates the change of status into a cultic and true hero that will take place only after the end of the narrative.[39] After the return to humanity, a pause in silence is briefly established. This happens at a point of mutual recognition and admiration in extreme suffering,[40] but immediately afterwards the agonistic-provocative confrontation continues, causing further delay.

However, the *Iliad* does not end with the solution, the ransom, or the *lysis of* Hector, but with the mourning for him expressed in intense *gooi* of grief as well as with his funeral celebration. Thus, as discussed above, the narration remains open, fluid, and lively. For the purpose of ritualized mourning, which, on an emotional level, forms a truly satisfying conclusion to the monumental epic of Achilles' *menis* and its aftermath, the *Iliad* ends with a mimetic scene of almost choreutic and collective performativity.

39. See NAGY 2012.

40. See RICHARDSON 1993, 343 *ad* 629-632; GRETHLEIN 2006, 300-301; BRÜGGER 2017, 229 *ad* 632-233. This, of course, has nothing to do with Heath's opinion that the hero has matured and learned to speak; Achilles' language has overcome his boasting, mocking, and provoking. "By becoming a storyteller, affirming life while discovering sympathy for suffering, Achilles aligns himself with the humanizing power of the poet himself." (HEATH 2005, 166).

Niobe as *Pathosformel*
A Difficult Figure to Relate to or Between Death and Life

In a second step I would like to explore what Niobe means to the audience, to the recipients, and how the figure is viewed today.[41] I have already touched upon some of the modern approaches. In what follows, there are many more to come. Already in antiquity, but even more so today, Niobe is an emblem of extreme human suffering, of the horror in the face of an unbearable amount of agony, and of the ensuing freezing in mute immobility as the emotional reaction to it. We can trace a more complete picture of Niobe when we include the versions by Sappho, Aeschylus, Sophocles – here especially in the famous comparison of Antigone with Niobe (*Ant*. 823-838) –, Aristophanes, and Ovid. Niobe's transformation into stone is the perfect *imago* of her traumatic experience.[42] Therefore, Aby Warburg regarded Niobe as a *Pathosformel*, a formulaic representation of certain gestures and forms of emotional expression. It works as a universally valid image that arouses the senses of anyone in an almost magical manner.[43] In her immense mourning Niobe undergoes a change into rock and stone, the most solid material we can imagine. It is not, as represented in other figures, a metamorphosis from an object to a living being, but her petrification is so to speak "a remarkable 'retrograde transformation' into pure standstill.[44] This highly touching scene is not self-sufficient, as it not only affected Niobe herself, but also has a radiating effect on the bystanders who can observe it inside the narrative, and even on the audience of

41. For this subchapter I benefited from a prepublished paper by Rimell 2023 (on academia.edu), for a volume (Telò - Benjamin 2024) totally dedicated to Niobe, which is announced for 2024. Unexpectedly, Niobe enjoys nowadays much intellectual attention and plays a new role in contemporary debates, a fact of which I was hardly aware when I announced my topic for the Ithaca-conference.

42. On the meaning of *metamorphosis* into stone, see Forbes Irving 1990, 138-148.

43. See Baert 2019. On representations of Niobe on vases, see e.g. Keuls 1978; Gaunt 2002; Bäbler 2006.

44. Baert 2019 § 2.

the Homeric text and any other form of reception in text and image. In a chain of mimesis effects anyone is affected by *eleos* and *phobos*, and frozen to a mute standstill in extreme terror. The scene of violence, mourning, and extreme grief over the mother's loss of her children is somewhat contagious. The best illumination for this mimetic contagion is Aristophanes' comic treatment of Aeschylus' tragic version of *Niobe* in *Frogs* (911-920): Euripides accuses his adversary of deceiving his audience with a pompous and archaic style that actually boils down to the negation of drama as action. Just like Achilles in *Myrmidons* (*Frogs* 912), Niobe sits as a solitary figure without motion, her face wrapped up in veils, in total silence, without emitting the slightest of sounds for almost the entire first half of the play. In a perverse charlatanry, Aeschylus aims at the *apate* of his audience that becomes increasingly blinded and stupefied by these dramatic effects, as nothing happens on scene (*Frogs* 909-910). The spectator only sits and waits in suspense for the moment when Niobe finally will utter something (*ὁ θεατὴς προσδοκῶν καθοῖτο, / ὁπόθ' ἡ Νιόβη τι φθέγξεται*, *Frogs* 919-920). In Aristophanes' comic logic both the tragedian and her character compel the spectator to be immobile, inactive, doomed to remain in the waiting room. The flipside of this parody is the insight that 'deception' (*apate*), in the logic of Gorgias, equals mimesis: *ὅ τ' ἀπατήσας δικαιότερος τοῦ μὴ ἀπατήσαντος καὶ ὁ ἀπατηθεὶς σοφώτερος τοῦ μὴ ἀπατηθέντος* (DK 82 B 23) ("the one who deceives is more just than the one who does not deceive, and the one who is deceived is wiser than the one who is not deceived").[45] Extreme emotion leads to total seclusion, inner retreat and frozen silence that is reenacted by the bystanders witnessing the scene. As we have seen in Homer, the people were equally transformed into stones (*Iliad* 24.611). Interestingly, Aristophanes parodies Niobe together with Achilles (*Frogs* 909-926). His retreat in *menis* had the same petrifying effect on the Greek army. On a famous vase in Basel, Achilles is depicted in the same

45. The sentence is transmitted by Plutarch in *De gloria Atheniensium* 348c and De *audiendis poetis* 15d; see also Bierl 1991, 170 with n. 181, 200 and Grethlein 2021, 1-32.

pose of veiling his head during the ambassy scene.[46] Moreover, it certainly is meaningful that the young Achilles uses Niobe, his female double in frozen immobility, as an example for Priam, a father in extreme grief over the death of Hector and his numerous sons, killed by the Myrmidonian hero. By means of her *paradeigma* Achilles aims to interrupt Priam's mourning, to make him eat, and thus to calm and normalize his extreme emotional status, at least temporarily. Via a female figure, a mother in mourning, he can reach the old father. Niobe becomes somewhat a mediating position, a transitional zone of signification, as she functions as a mythic person, close to both. Achilles has finally taken the step to give up the corpse of Hector, even though only under compulsion of Zeus. Thus, Peleus' son finally quelled his anger and returned to human nature. Achilles, the hero of "constant sorrow" and lament,[47] recurs to the example of Niobe, the mythic paradigm of grief, to appeal to Priam to calm down or at least to have a break in his blue mood by inventing a small and unique detail in Niobe's mourning: the temporary release of her deep grief, the interruption to eat. It sounds almost incredible and absurd: The emblem of absolute frozen stiffness and sclerosis in mourning has a moment of respite. Only later will she turn into stone for good. The transformation into hard rock experiences a short return to life. Almost dead material and total silence will temporarily come back to life and turn into a woman who eats and has some human exchanges during a meal. As seen, the example of the gender reversal is, at least to some extent, an offence, and the consolatory rhetoric has an almost sarcastic effect, because the respite will not put a definite end to Priam's mourning. On the contrary, he, just like Niobe, will change his position and turn to freezing in bitter grief. The petrification, the transformation into stone and natural materiality, makes Niobe a perfect example of being on the edge between human and non-human.

46. Athenian red-figure stamnos attributed to Triptolemos Painter, ca. 500–450 BC, Basel, Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig BS 477. On the other side, the fight over the corpse of Patroclus, represented as a ram, is depicted in a sacrificial perspective.

47. Nagy 2013, 74-75.

Be it her own fault, her pride, *hybris*, or in Walter Benjamin's reading just fate – an ambiguous situation, a trap to challenge a goddess with terrible consequences –, be it revenge, punishment or lawmaking mythic violence, the emotional reaction of the victim affects us in the *Pathosformel*. In any case, as her grief is so immense that she transforms into stone, it is hard to envision loving her or even only to relating to her, as Andrew Benjamin has recently argued.[48] Can we only imagine mourning Niobe, the quintessential mourner? Wasn't she arrogant, over-confident, proud, and transgressive? Didn't Niobe offend the goddess Leto, another quintessential mother? Can she earn our compassion or empathy? Be it as it may, what happened to her is most tragic, a bitter onslaught and a sudden attack by the gods. It came upon her like a *daimon*, and she must bear the cruel consequences, as Aeschylus seems to suggest.[49] As a daughter of Tantalus, she belongs to a family of transgressors, even though she herself is mostly described as a borderline case. In summary, Niobe's myth can be judged in legal terms, and it is a matter of justice to do her justice. As a victim of terrible violence at the hands of Leto's children – for it is not Niobe who is shot dead by Leto, but her sons and daughters who are killed by Apollo and Artemis – Niobe is most of all a figure of endurance. The extreme violence in the death of her children and the resulting extreme maternal grief over the loss leaves a mark on her body and face.[50] Niobe is appalled at the cruel scene; she remains horror-stricken and terrified. The extreme distress makes her freeze to a distorted grimace and gesture, a metaphor for the horror that turns her from life to a state of deathlike rigor, to most solid stone or ice, to a grave, a statue or rock.[51] The result of the petrification is

48. See Benjamin 2015, 113-138, who contrasts Niobe with the Virgin Mary, as Hegel has done in the past.

49. See Ozbek 2022.

50. On "mothers in mourning", see Loraux 1990.

51. See Baert 2019, § 0: "From a psychoanalytical perspective, Niobe's petrifaction symbolises the straitening of her life and the loss of *anima* within a culture divorced from authentic feeling, nature, and instinct."

unbearable to look at. Its gaze, sometimes recognizable as a former human being only from a certain distance,[52] affects us.

However, Niobe's new nature as solid stone is not the entire story. The rock is in the vicinity of water and nymphs. Fountains run down on it, ivy and other plants grow on and over it, embracing its structure. Weather – rain, storms, ice, and snow – will gradually make the solid structure crumble and decompose. The Sophoclean Antigone compares her dire fate with that of Niobe in a similar way: "*I have heard that the Phrygian stranger, Tantalus' daughter, died the saddest death, near lofty Sipylus; her did the growth of the rock, like clinging ivy, subdue, and as she melts away rain, as men say, and snow never leave her, and with her ever-weeping eyes she soaks the mountain ridges; very like her am I, as the god sends me to sleep.*" (Soph. *Ant*. 823-833 trans. Lloyd-Jones 1994). The rock takes hold of her and like a god – perhaps Dionysus or Hades – seems to do violence to her body, almost like in a rape.

Jacques Lacan draws a very dark picture from these lines. In his psychoanalytical reading of *Antigone,* he throws a Sadean glance at Niobe as a figure of absolute annihilation in petrification and frozen death. According to him, Antigone compares her upcoming enclosure in the cave with Niobe's transformation because both are crossing a threshold and "suspended in the zone between life and death", but actually "between two deaths".[53] The reason for this is that Antigone's deed has been driven by her death instinct from the very beginning. "In effect, Antigone herself has been declaring from the beginning: 'I am dead, and I desire death.' When Antigone depicts herself as Niobe becoming petrified, what is she identifying

52. Pausanias 1.21.3: *ταύτην τὴν Νιόβην καὶ αὐτὸς εἶδον ἀνελθὼν ἐς τὸν Σίπυλον τὸ ὄρος· ἡ δὲ πλησίον μὲν πέτρα καὶ κρημνός ἐστιν οὐδὲν παρόντι σχῆμα παρεχόμενος γυναικὸς οὔτε ἄλλως οὔτε πενθούσης· εἰ δέ γε πορρωτέρω γένοιο, δεδακρυμένην δόξεις ὁρᾶν καὶ κατηφῆ γυναῖκα. – This Niobe I myself saw when I had gone up to Mount Sipylus. When you are near it is a beetling crag, with not the slightest resemblance to a woman, mourning or otherwise; but if you go further away you will think you see a woman in tears, with head bowed down.* Transl. Jones 1918.

53. Lacan 1992, ch. xxi, 270-283, esp. 280.

herself with, if it isn't that inanimate condition in which Freud taught us to recognize the form in which the death instinct is manifested? An illustration of the death instinct is what we find here."[54]

Now, on the threshold to Hades, she feels the point of no return, the real and 'second death' that erases and annihilates the symbolic order of reality. To sum up, according to this bleak scenario, Lacan does not relate to or feels pity with Niobe, but identifies himself with a questionable observer who is drawing pleasure from Niobe's horrible play of ordeals, as she is suffering an agony located between "two deaths" in a Sadean scenario.[55] But instead of viewing the petrification as annihilation and nullification of life, new approaches in humanities about materiality pave the way to a fresh understanding. Therefore, Niobe will not end as a dead object, rather the extremely solid material of stone remains living nature. Water, the tears of ever weeping Niobe, can decompose the rock over the long range of time and transform it into new vibrant materials in the assemblages of nature, rain, and weather.[56] This is also the perspective of Ovid's detailed description of her transformation in *Metamorphoses* 6.146-312, especially at the very end:

orba resedit

exanimes inter natos natasque virumque
deriguitque malis; nullos movet aura capillos,
in vultu color est sine sanguine, lumina maestis
stant inmota genis, nihil est in imagine vivum. 305
ipsa quoque interius cum duro lingua palato
congelat, et venae desistunt posse moveri;
nec flecti cervix nec bracchia reddere motus
nec pes ire potest; intra quoque viscera saxum est.
flet tamen et validi circumdata turbine venti 310

54. Lacan 1992, 281.
55. Lacan 1992, 257-262, esp. 260, 261, 268.
56. See Ingold 2007; Ingold 2011, 19-32, esp. 30-32; on Niobe, see also Ozbek 2022.

in patriam rapta est: ibi fixa cacumine montis
liquitur, et lacrimas etiam nunc marmora manant.

Ovid, *Met.*6.301-312

«Now does the childless mother sit down amid the lifeless bodies of her sons, her daughters, and her husband, in stony grief. Her hair stirs not in the breeze; her face is pale and bloodless, and her eyes are fixed and staring in her sad face. There is nothing alive in the picture. Her very tongue is silent, frozen to her mouth's roof, and her veins can move no longer; her neck cannot bend nor her arms move nor her feet go. Within also her vitals are stone. But still she weeps; and, caught up in a strong, whirling wind, she is rapt away to her own native land. There, set on a mountain's peak, she weeps; and even to this day tears trickle from the marble».

trans. MILLER, rev. Goold 1916

Niobe does not change entirely into dead material. Even as marble stone she goes on weeping. The whirling wind lifted the heavy stone and carried her away to the top of Mt. Sipylos, to the land of her father Tantalus, where she fuses with the rock. The tears as fountains make her melt away, and even today we can witness a rock that drips tears. The paradox of the very last glance conveys a figure that is not "between two deaths", as Lacan suggested, but between death and life. Niobe will live on, mourn, and weep forever, thus decompose solid rock in the far future. This end of the story is highly ambiguous: Is the petrification the pinnacle of a brutal punishment or a natural response to a traumatic event, a spontaneous reaction of a freezing withdrawal in psychological self-defense?[57] Or is the outcome a gift of mercy, an act of pity and compassion by the gods to end her suffering so that in a way *eleos* (fear, horror) would end in *eleos* (pity)?[58]

57. See FELDHERR 2004, esp. 136-137. The same ambiguity and all strands of the story can already be detected in the Homeric passage.

58. See FELDHERR 2004, 136 with secondary literature in n. 25. On compassion granted by the gods in the Homeric passage, see SCHMITZ 2001, 152 n. 23.

The suspension between a frozen state of death and ongoing vividness is the decisive point that speaks against a unilaterally negative judgment of Niobe. She has the potential to overcome her bleak situation. But there are even aspects in her biography that speak in favor of the fact that Niobe was a person one could relate to in friendship and perhaps even in love.[59] In fr. 142 V. Sappho says that "Leto and Niobe were very dear companions" (trans. Campbell 1982) (Λάτω καὶ Νιόβα μάλα μὲν φίλαι ἦσαν ἔταιραι), obviously long before their motherhood.[60] The verse seems to underpin the complete rupture between once close friends on a mythical level. In the times of Sappho and Alcaeus around 600 BC, Lesbos was notorious for the political struggle among the *hetaireiai*. Former *hetairoi* would break off the solidarity, change sides (as Pittacus did) and thus become bitter enemies. The same can happen on the female side. Sappho, as a clan member (*hetaira*), is involved in the political day-to-day affairs of Lesbos. As I argued elsewhere, in her poetic and erotic activities in the circle she engages in politics with others means.[61] The transmitted line of fr. 142 apparently is deeply ironic, almost tragic, and perhaps bitterly mocking.[62] Be it as it may, Niobe – as daughter of Dione, mother of Aphrodite, thus Aphrodite's sister – must have been beautiful and due to her divine descendance she obviously had no problem to have close, perhaps even homoerotic ties with Leto, an offspring from the Titans Koios and Phoibe. Niobe grew up in Lydia, on Mt. Sipylos where her father Tantalos ruled on the acropolis. She married Amphion, ruler of Thebes and a son of Zeus and Antiope. As Tantalos' daughter, Niobe has a transgressive potential. It is not clear where Niobe and Leto were united in close friendship, perhaps still in Asia Minor. Both are of divine origin, the hierarchy between them is initially flat but becomes steeper when Zeus became Leto's lover. In consequence, she became mother of the famous siblings, the mighty gods Artemis and Apol-

59. Benjamin 2015, 117 calls such a relation "*being-at-one-with* Niobe".
60. With reference to this verse of Sappho, see also Benjamin 2015, 119-120.
61. Bierl 2021, 405-410, esp. 408-409.
62. Bierl 2021, 344.

lo. Niobe's husband Amphion is less important, as he is only a son of Zeus. But in contrast to Leto, they have numerous children together. The reason of the growing distance and rivalry between both women consists in their motherhood and female fertility. Motherhood in grief will be one key factor in the following analysis.[63]

As is well known, Leto had a particularly hard time giving birth. It is a story of suffering and agony. Out of pure jealousy, Hera, Zeus' mighty wife and mother of many gods, tried to prevent Leto from childbirth because Gaia, Hera's grandmother, had predicted that the children Zeus would have with Leto would be more powerful than her own. Leto's life is therefore imbued with hardship and female rivalry over power and prestige. Leto had to wander through the entire earth to find a place to deliver her babies, but no land dared to grant her the permission. When the swimming island Delos was found as a last resort, jealous Hera put so much pressure on her daughter Eileithyia, the goddess of birth, that she lacked the courage to aid Leto, who was already on the brink of parturition. Eileithyia's long delay kept her in labor for nine days. The suffering must have been immense before she finally could give birth to her twins under a palm tree. Suffering, maternity, sorrow, pathos, rivalry, violence, grief, depression, narcissistic behavior, the closeness between gods and men, and the not yet existing boundary between the human and the divine spheres are the main motifs and prerequisites for a deeper understanding of Niobe as an emblematic *paradeigma* which Achilles used for his personal purposes.

Niobe as Emblem of Suffering in Modern Theory

In the following, I would like to present very briefly the major strands of modern approaches to the very problematic figure of Niobe. There are two main groups of interpretations by modern thinkers who deal with Niobe: a) the negative view; b) a more open and positive view. The latter will be

63. On mothers in mourning, see Loraux 1990, on the Niobe-passage in the *Iliad*, see 70, 119 with n. 106, 139-140.

complemented by a closer exploration of the basic theme of maternity, Niobe as *mater dolorosa*.

The Negative View on Niobe from Walter Benjamin to Giorgio Agamben: Violence, Law, and the Power of the Sovereign

Hegel passed a negative judgment on Niobe in his *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* (1820-1829) when he compared her with the Virgin Mary, the symbol of sacrificial love.[64] Based on Hegel, Andrew Benjamin has recent-

64. Hegel 1838, 35-36 (normalized in German): "In den Idealen der Alten dagegen sehen wir, unabhängig von jenem angedeuteten Zuge einer stillen Trauer, wohl nur den Ausdruck des Schmerzes edler Naturen, wie z.B. in der Niobe und dem Laokoon; sie vergehen nicht in Klage und Verzweiflung, sondern bewähren sich groß und hochherzig darin, aber dieses Bewahren ihrer selbst bleibt leer: das Leiden, der Schmerz ist gleichsam das Letzte, und an die Stelle der Aussöhnung und Befriedigung muss eine kalte Resignation treten, in welcher das Individuum, ohne in sich zusammenzubrechen, das aufgibt, woran es festgehalten hatte. Nicht das Niedrige ist zerdrückt, keine Wut, keine Verachtung oder Verdrießlichkeit gibt sich kund, aber die Hoheit der Individualität ist doch nur ein starres Beisichsein, ein erfüllungsloses Ertragen des Schicksals, in welchem der Adel und Schmerz der Seele nicht als ausgeglichen erscheinen. Den Ausdruck der Seligkeit und Freiheit hat erst die romantische religiöse Liebe. Diese Einigkeit und Befriedigung nun ist ihrer Natur nach geistig konkret, denn sie ist die Empfindung des Geistes, der sich in einem Anderen eins mit sich selber weiß. Dadurch sind hier, wenn der dargestellte Inhalt vollständig sein soll, zwei Seiten gefordert, insofern zur Liebe die Verdoppelung geistiger Persönlichkeit notwendig ist; sie beruht auf zwei selbständigen Personen, welche dennoch das Gefühl ihrer Einheit haben. Mit dieser Einheit jedoch ist immer zugleich das Moment des *Negativen* verbunden. Die Liebe nämlich gehört der Subjektivität an, das Subjekt aber ist *dieses* für sich bestehende Herz, das, um zu lieben, von sich selbst ablassen, sich aufgeben, den spröden Punkt seiner Eigentümlichkeit opfern muss. Dies Opfer macht das *Rührende* in der Liebe aus, die nur in der Hingebung lebt und empfindet. Wenn deshalb der Mensch dennoch in dem Hingeben sein Selbst zurückerhält und in dem Aufheben seines Fürsichseins gerade zum affirmativen Fürsichsein gelangt, so bleibt bei dem Gefühl dieser Einigkeit und ihres höchsten Glücks doch das Negative, die Rührung übrig, nicht sowohl als Empfindung des Opfers als vielmehr der unverdienten Seligkeit, sich dessen ungeachtet selbständig und mit sich in Einheit zu fühlen. Die Rührung ist das Gefühl des dialektischen Widerspruchs, die Persönlichkeit aufgegeben zu haben und doch selbständig zu sein, ein Widerspruch, der in der Liebe vorhanden und in ihr ewig gelöst ist." And 45-46: "Maria sieht Christus das Kreuz tragen, sie sieht ihn am Kreuze leiden und sterben, vom Kreuze herabgenommen und begraben werden, und keines Schmerz von allen ist tiefer als der ihrige. Doch auch in solchem Leiden macht weder die Starrheit des Schmerzes oder nur des Verlustes noch das Tragen der Notwendigkeit oder

ly put forward the hypothesis that we cannot relate to Niobe at all.[65] The milestone of the negative perspective on her is Walter Benjamin's (1892-1940) rather enigmatic and somehow problematic contribution "Critique of Violence", which the German Jewish thinker, cultural critic, and essayist composed in 1921.[66] In his idiosyncratic approach Niobe functions as the example of the ambiguous mechanisms of mythic violence. Unknowingly, she falls prey to her fate to challenge Leto. Offended, she strikes back via her twins Artemis and Apollo, who kill Niobe's numerous children. In her boasting she somehow transgresses a boundary that is not actually drawn yet. Benjamin analyses the deed and its consequences through the lens of law and the development of judicial order. According to him, the act has a lawmaking and law-preserving effect. It establishes a firm boundary as a universal law. The violence by Apollo and Artemis is later recognized by Niobe as her personal responsibility for the death of her children. In a next step, she feels deep grief and sorrow over the death and assumes the guilt. In doing so she freezes to stone. In Benjamin's own words:

die Anklage der Ungerechtigkeit des Schicksals den eigentlichen Inhalt aus, so dass hier besonders die Vergleichung mit dem Schmerze der Niobe charakteristisch wird. Auch Niobe hat alle ihre Kinder verloren und steht nun da in reiner Hoheit und unverkümmerter Schönheit. Was sich hier erhält, ist die Seite der Existenz dieser Unglücklichen, die zur Natur gewordene Schönheit, welche den ganzen Umfang ihrer da seienden Realität ausmacht, diese wirkliche Individualität bleibt in ihrer Schöne, was sie ist. Aber ihr Inneres, ihr Herz hat den ganzen Gehalt seiner Liebe, seiner Seele verloren; ihre Individualität und Schönheit kann nur versteinern. Der Schmerz der Maria ist von ganz anderer Art. Sie empfindet, fühlt den Dolch, der die Mitte ihrer Seele durchdringt, das Herz bricht ihr, aber sie versteinert nicht. Sie *hatte* nicht nur die Liebe, sondern ihr volles Inneres *ist* die Liebe, die freie konkrete Innigkeit, die den absoluten Inhalt dessen bewahrt, was sie verliert, und in dem Verluste selbst des Geliebten in dem Frieden der Liebe bleibt. Das Herz bricht ihr; aber das Substantielle ihres Herzens, der Gehalt ihres Gemüts, der in unverlierbarer Lebendigkeit durch ihr Seelenleiden scheint, ist etwas unendlich Höheres: die lebendige Schönheit der *Seele* gegen die abstrakte Substanz, deren *leiblich* ideales Dasein, wenn sie verlorengeht, unverdorben bleibt, aber zu Stein wird."

65. Benjamin 2015, 113-138.

66. Benjamin 1921 (= SW 1: 236-252). I thank Ajuvia Kahane for pointing me to Benjamin. On Benjamin's "Critique of Violence", see Butler 2006; Blumenthal-Barby 2009; Lindemann 2010; Weber 2012; Guzmán 2014.

"The legend of Niobe contains an outstanding example of this. True, it might appear that the action of Apollo and Artemis is only a punishment. But their violence establishes a law far more than it punishes the infringement of a law that already exists. Niobe's arrogance calls down fate upon her not because her arrogance offends against the law but because it challenges fate – to a fight in which fate must triumph and can bring to light a law only in its triumph. How little such divine violence was, to the ancients, the law-preserving violence of punishment is shown by the heroic legends in which the hero – for example, Prometheus – challenges fate with dignified courage, fights it with varying fortunes, and is not left by the legend without hope of one day bringing a new law to men. It is really this hero and the legal violence of the myth native to him that the public tries to picture even now in admiring the miscreant. Violence therefore bursts upon Niobe from the uncertain, ambiguous sphere of fate. It is not actually destructive. Although it brings a cruel death to Niobe's children, it stops short of claiming the life of their mother, whom it leaves behind, more guilty than before through the death of the children, both as an eternally mute bearer of guilt and as a boundary stone on the frontier between men and gods. If this immediate violence in mythic manifestations proves closely related, indeed identical, to lawmaking violence, it reflects a problematic light on lawmaking violence, insofar as the latter was characterized above, in the account of military violence, as merely a mediate violence. At the same time this connection promises to provide further illumination of fate, which in all cases underlies legal violence, and to conclude in broad outline the critique of the latter. For the function of violence in lawmaking is twofold, in the sense that lawmaking pursues as its end, with violence as the means, *what* is to be established as law, but at the moment of instatement does not dismiss violence; rather, at this very moment of lawmaking, it specifically establishes as law not an end unalloyed by violence but one necessarily and intimately bound to it, under the title of power. Lawmaking is powermaking, assumption of power, and to that extent an immediate manifestation of violence. Justice is the principle of all divine endmaking, power the principle of all mythic lawmaking." (Benjamin 1921 = SW 1: 248)

Benjamin further differentiates between mythic and divine violence, setting God's judgment on the company of Korah in contrast to Niobe:

"… as an example of such violence. God's judgment strikes privileged Levites, strikes them without warning, without threat, and does not stop short of annihilation. But in annihilating it also expiates, and a profound connection between the lack of bloodshed and the expiatory character of this violence is unmistakable. For blood is the symbol of mere life. The dissolution of legal violence stems (as cannot be shown in detail here) from the guilt of more natural life, which consigns the living, innocent and unhappy, to a retribution that 'expiates' the guilt of mere life-and doubtless also purifies the guilty, not of guilt, however, but of law. For with mere life, the rule of law over the living ceases. Mythic violence is bloody power over mere life for its own sake; divine violence is pure power over all life for the sake of the living. The first demands sacrifice; the second accepts it." (Benjamin 1921 = SW 1: 250)

The question arises, whether Walter Benjamin's political reading in the sense that the myth of Niobe basically revolves around the boundary between men and gods, and challenges or even transgresses it, can be adequate, legitimate, or correct in terms of the standards developed by ancient and religious studies. Amir Ahmadi argues against it and sets several readings that we usually apply in ancient studies, such as a) philosophical or Orphic technics to come close to the divine aimed at, b) heroic rivalry with the antagonistic god, c) the function of presenting a negative foil to the standard view, or, d) in structural terms, the presentation of an aitiological narrative of how our order of things came into being.[67] Yet, as an intellectual outsider of the professional circles of Classics, Benjamin introduced fresh insights by honing in on the questions of violence, power, sovereignty, law and order of a political system as well as the motivations for a potential resistance against it, or even of a revolutionary atmosphere against the order. Focusing on ideology and political sociology, he pointed around

67. Ahmadi 2015, citing relevant titles.

a century ago to the question of how our order based on laws and boundaries came into being and is preserved through mechanisms of violence.

Benjamin uses Niobe as the paradigm to explain how and through which means a strict boundary between the Olympians and the humans had been established during the heroic age and could then be permanently maintained. In the *Iliad* we come across a society where men, heroes, and gods obviously interact without a fixed dividing line. Heroic warriors like Diomedes, Patroclus, or Achilles attack gods fighting on the sidelines. The entire *Iliad* is a poem about the gradual disentanglement of gods and humans and their final dissociation.[68] Through threats and vehement interventions father Zeus must prevent his fellow gods from fighting or interfering on either side of the Trojan war. It seems as if the division is established at the very end. Only Achilles, as the best of the Achaeans, challenges the new order for a last time. His fury leads to a fight against the river gods and degenerates in a fierce battle of cosmic dimension (*Iliad* 21). It almost ends in an outbreak of violence between all gods on the battlefield. But the tension between the parties suddenly dissolves in a comic manner since they have lost any interest to enter the battle on either side. At the end, Zeus has finally reached his goal in a long process of violence and compulsion. But at the beginning of *Iliad* 24 he still meets the last obstacle in this civilizing undertaking. Achilles' desecration of Hector's dead body still threatens the order. That is why it must be stopped. Zeus therefore decides to urge Achilles to release the corpse of Hector. All other gods must agree.

In the earlier rhapsodies, as for example in *Iliad* 5,[69] however, the boundary between gods and men is still rather loose. Athena acts as a personal assistant of Diomedes. She gives him strength when he was wounded by Pandaros. Moreover, she provides him with the ability to see the gods on the

68. E.g. Ulf 2016, esp. 8-14.

69. In the correspondence with Ahuvia Kahane he mentioned (his email of 16 January 2022) also the special degree of violence in *Iliad* 5, on which he is currently writing a commentary. He noted that he would use Walter Benjamin in his general approach to this issue.

battlefield and instructs him to stay away from them, except for Aphrodite. In case he noticed her, he should not refrain from attacking the goddess. In a bitter fight with Aeneas over the body of Pandaros, he indeed sees Aphrodite coming to help her wounded son, as Diomedes fiercely hit him on the hip with a huge rock (*Iliad* 5.305). As he was told by Athena, he does not back away, and slightly injures the Aphrodite on the back of her hand (*Iliad* 5.311-343). In the meantime, Apollo steps in to protect a distressed Aeneas. At this point Diomedes even dares to challenge Apollo. He does so three times. At the fourth attempt, Apollo orders Diomedes to stand clear since they are not equal (440-442). Only then does Diomedes yield to the god so that Apollo succeeds in removing Aeneas to the mountains, where Leto and Artemis will heal his wound (*Iliad* 5.432-448). Moreover, in place of Aeneas Apollo creates an *eidolon* and asks Ares, the personification of war, to join the fight against Diomedes in his *aristeia* (449-459). In a fierce battle, as can be expected, Diomedes runs into danger of losing his life. At this point Hera and Athena interfere directly. Athena exhorts him to dare attack even Ares and with Athena's help Diomedes inflicts an injury on the god of war, who, in his distress, must escape to Mount Olympus (461-867). There, he shows his wounds to Zeus and complains about Athena's violence and Diomedes' aggression against gods. But Zeus declares that he hates Ares vehemently since he interfered on either side of the war. If he were not his son, he would expel him forever from heaven (868-894).

From this short description of *Iliad* 5, the extreme violence of war and the chaotic intermingling between gods and men become evident. However, through this negative foil, the recipients also become aware of the boundary that is to be established at the very end. The rhapsody is imbued with utter and almost pure violence. In another sense, as defined by Benjamin, the violence displayed here is divine, as it comes from the gods and is even directed against the gods. It is not an expiatory force but simply destructive and a threat to the order of Zeus.

To return to Walter Benjamin's interpretation of Niobe: One could argue that the violence of Apollo and Artemis in *Iliad* 24 is again rather pure and divine than mythic. In Benjamin's terms mythic means the inevitable

fate that befalls a human being. But fate is a strange and superseded concept. In this respect, Benjamin seems to have drawn from interpretations of Greek tragedy, particularly of *Oedipus Tyrannos*, which was in circulation in the 19th and early 20th centuries. According to this reading, a hero, for example Oedipus or Niobe, falls into a sort of trap so that a new order can be established as law in a most violent form by drawing boundaries between inside and outside.[70] Apollo's and Artemis' arrows signify absolute violence, directed not against Niobe but against her children. They are shot from afar. The scene is reminiscent of Apollo's arrows in *Iliad* 1 that kill and bring a pestilence (*Iliad* 1.44-52). This violence is cathartic, somehow 'expiating'. Apollo, the healer, brings the plague that means purification from another pollution. Apollo as Smintheus, like his Anatolian and Semitic form of Rešep, kills to make humans a sacrifice for a higher idea.[71] Both twins are responsible for the passage from male and female youth to adulthood.[72] In initiation rituals the young people must be notionally killed so that they can be reborn. The sacrifice of the young children must be performed to mark the fundamental difference between gods and humans. The violence is expiating and cathartic since it frees humans from ontological confusion. In structural terms, it underlines and explains the ontological divide between the divine and human spheres. Sacrifice reflects on the ritual level exactly what the violent myth about the death of children as a result of transgression addresses.

Carl Schmitt (1888-1985), the controversial jurist, prominent NS-party member, conservative political, and theoretical thinker, strongly builds on Benjamin's ideas and interprets the violence even more in terms of political decisionism as the salient feature of the sovereign. One year after Ben-

70. Benjamin 1921 = SW 1: 252: "But all mythic, lawmaking violence, which we may call 'executive', is pernicious. Pernicious, too, is the law-preserving, 'administrative' violence that serves it."

71. See Burkert 1985, 145. His presence is particularly associated with Lycia (ibid. 144). This could be a link to Niobe on Mt. Sipylos. On Apollo as pernicious "bow god", ibid. 147.

72. See Burkert 1985, 143-149, esp. 143-145, and 149-152.

jamin Schmitt defined his status in *Politische Theologie. Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität* (1922) as follows: "sovereign is he who decides on the exception."[73]

Giorgio Agamben develops these concepts further by pitting Schmitt against Benjamin.[74] According to the Italian philosopher born in 1942, the problem of violence and biopolitical power in Western culture lies in the ambiguous status of the sacred and in the blurred concept of life. Usually, life is not anymore understood in its ancient Greek dichotomy between *zoe*, natural life in a biological sense, and *bios*, life qualified as human existence in a political order and community under the conditions of an advanced culture. In addition, Agamben aims to disclose a prior understanding of the sacred in the anthropological sense before it was regarded as something set apart as holy from the profane, through the ritual praxis of sacrifice. In this primary comprehension there is no distinction between sacred and profane, religious and secular. The act of setting apart or the definition of what and which life is holy and in what sense is highly political. The person in charge, that is the sovereign, can make an exception (from *excipere*) and has the authority to decide over some subjects' lives being conceived as sacred. In doing so *zoe* coincides with *bios*. In Roman Jakobson's terms, the unmarked becomes blurred with the marked. For Agamben the symbol of this effect is the figure of the *homo sacer*, a term coined by the Roman law for a person who is an outlaw. In his peculiar judicial status, he can be killed by anyone, but he cannot be sacrificed. In a political act, the person has been declared sacred, *sacer*, by the ruler. The sovereign – in Michel Foucault's terms – does biopolitics by determining which life, which *bios* of the citizens, can be declared nude or bare life to be killed by anyone.[75] Although Agamben recognized William Robertson Smith's insight into the duality of the sacred in ancient Semitic culture,

73. Schmitt 1985, 5; on Schmitt and Benjamin, see Lucci 2019, esp. 4-9.

74. See esp. Agamben 1998. On Agamben, see among others, see Hussain - Ptacek 2000; Lucci 2019; McLoughlin 2020.

75. Foucault 1997; 2008.

where holy objects are simultaneously regarded as impure,[76] the Italian philosopher is not aware of the fact that the *homo sacer* is not an entirely new religio-judicial concept of the Roman period. I would like to emphasize that the Greek analogy of the *pharmakos*, the Greek scapegoat, is similarly ambiguous: pure and impure, criminal and holy, polluting and cathartic. At this point we are again close to René Girard's scapegoat mechanism that helps to overcome a sacrificial crisis.[77] Although Agamben clearly dismisses a sacrificial character in regard of the *homo sacer*, the concept of sacrificial violence is somewhat present in scapegoating and the absolute power over the naked life. Anthropology thus, in contrast to Agamben, highlights the sacrificial impulse that drives violence. Agamben himself associated the absolute authority with the unspeakable, the *arrheton*, of the sacrificial mystery. Sacred violence means to him a means to reactivate cosmogonic energies through yearly rituals and sacrifices.[78] According to him, Dionysus is the emblem of sacred violence both using and suffering violence, a god both destructive and auto-destructive.[79]

Be it as it may, we could try to associate Agamben's controversial thoughts on the absolute power of the sovereign over his subjects in producing bare lives to be killed with the sovereign power of Zeus and, particularly in our example, of Leto. She uses her twins as a sort of police force equipped with bow and arrow to deploy their divine violence to brutally shoot Niobe's numerous children. To some extent Niobe's sons and daughters equal *homines sacri*, subjects and only nude lives, to be killed but not sacrificed. Yet, their fatal end is imbued with sacrificial traits. It looks as if the gods granted a special gift to Niobe, namely her female fertility and ability to give birth to many children. This gift can also be taken away by

76. Smith 1894. This is also mentioned by Hussain - Ptacek 2000, 503.

77. See Bierl 2007, 34-36, also to Girard (see above), and Hussain - Ptacek 2000, esp. 509-510.

78. Lucci 2019, 3-4.

79. Agamben 2009, esp. 109; see McLoughlin 2020, 187, pointing to the influence of George Bataille.

the gods. Due to the excessive sacrificial violence, the children become victims, killed by an absolute and divine power. The victims are set apart for a long period of time. Over nine days they must lie in their blood. Frozen to stone like Niobe, the people cannot react with the funerary rites and bury them as is the custom (*Iliad* 24.610-611). It is pure violence that emanates from the young energetic gods. The ensuing response to the sacred act does not only inspire awe, but also spreads fear and horror. As Rudolf Otto puts it in *Das Heilige*: the sacred as an experience of the numinous is a "mysterium tremendum", a "fascinosum" and "augustum".[80] Behind Apollo and Artemis is Zeus, who turns the people to stone in Homer's *Iliad* (24.611). It is obviously his will, because the ruler of Mt. Olympus wishes to establish his absolute power of the sovereign and draw a clear line between gods and humans. Finally, on the tenth day "the gods in heaven" step in for the mortals and bury the dead bodies (see 612). This means that the dead receive a grave, a *taphos*, a *sema* as *mnema*, a sign that serves as a marker of memory to commemorate them.[81] Therefore, we can read the story also in heroic terms. Leto and Zeus grant their antagonistic rivals a heroic status after death. Niobe's children receive an official grave, and Niobe herself, once she has morphed into stone, is translocated to Mt. Sipylos, where she becomes her own *sema*. Sacred and divine violence turns the mother and her offspring into heroes so that they, after receiving blood offerings themselves, will send their energies to the mortals. Through the horrible event commemorated in a myth, "a traditional tale with secondary, partial reference to something of collective importance",[82] everyone will recognize that there is an awe-inspiring boundary between gods and humans.

80. Otto 1917, respectively 13-38, 39-51, 52-73.
81. See Baert 2019, § 2.
82. Burkert 1979, 23.

The Openness to a More Positive Perspective on Niobe: Materiality and Life in Suffering

We have already mentioned that the recent trend of materiality in humanities could help to revise the negative picture of Niobe. The reason for this is that critics following this modern approach tend to ascribe a certain amount of agency to objects in texts and performances. In this vein, Tim Ingold argues that even the most solid material like stone or rock is not dead but vibrant insofar as it is part of a natural exchange as well as a decomposition and transformation process under the condition of climate influences.[83] Therefore, Niobe's petrification would not mean final nullification. Rather, she would go on living just as grief and sorrow never cease. Niobe would thus assume a new dignity and reach a higher philosophical state of inner happiness in suffering.

Judith Butler interestingly comes to the same conclusion in her deep engagement with Benjamin's "Critique of Violence".[84] She recognizes that Benjamin's enigmatic and highly ambiguous phrasing provides the impetus to hint at a much more open understanding of Niobe. In the end of her analysis, she wonders in a similar way as I did, whether the violence of Apollo and Artemis could not also be divine. In a very conditional way, she develops a scenario of an "expiation" for Niobe:

> "Can we imagine? Would justice in this case require a conjecture, the opening up of the possibility of conjecture? We can imagine only that the rock would dissolve into water, and that her guilt would give way to endless tears. It would no longer be a question of what she did to deserve such a punishment, but of what system of punishment imposes such a violence upon her. We can imagine her rising up again to question the brutality of the law, and we can imagine her shedding the guilt of her arrogance in an angry refusal of the violent authority wielded against her and an endless grief for the loss of those lives. If that sorrow

83. Ingold 2007; Ingold 2011, 19-32, esp. 30-32.
84. Butler 2006.

> is endless, perhaps it is also perennial, even eternal, at which point it is her loss and also part of the 'downfall' that links her loss to the rhythms of destruction that constitute what in life is sacred and what of life makes for happiness." (Butler 2006, 218)

According to Butler, Benjamin insinuates that the subject under the condition of the mythic violence of law has the right to resist, to break the "circle" of the vicious mechanism and to "throw off the shackles of law". The abrupt ending of Benjamin's text might include a destructive potential for a protest and a reversal of the events (219). Therefore, Butler concludes the contribution with a contrafactual reading:

> "Imagine, if you can, that Apollo and Artemis tell their mother to get a grip and refuse to obey her command, or that the military, refusing to break up a strike, effectively goes on strike itself, lays down its weapons, opens the borders, refuses to man or close the checkpoints, all its members relieved of the guilt that keeps obedience and state violence in place, prompted rather to withhold their action by the memory and anticipation of too much sorrow and grief, and this – in the name of the living." (219)

In his further philosophical development, Agamben, who despite his early departure from Benjamin's *Critique of Violence* to the best of my knowledge does not explicitly refer to Niobe in detail, sketches a similar possibility to escape from the pernicious circles of law and biopolitics. Pure violence of a constructive manner becomes for him the possibility of a human life that is independent from the mechanism of law. It is a world after the redemption or revolution, as projected by the Christian or communist thinkers, or a universe where law, as it ceases to exist, coincides with life, like in Kafka's *Der neue Advokat* (1920). Agamben thus looks out for forms of life, in particular a true and philosophical life anchored in literature, art, music, theater, and painting so that one succeeds in overcoming the dichotomies of *bios*/*zoe*.[85] In *Autoritratto nello studio* Agamben concludes by

85. Agamben 2016, 135. See Lucci 2019, 8-10.

projecting a vegetative form of life that fuses with nature in Spinoza's sense of a *natura naturans*. The Italian thinker solves and transcends the problem of violence as in this form of life he aspires to turn into pure grass and herbs.[86] The reason for this is the fact that both him and the grass come into being and pass away, grow and wither. As he puts it in his own words: "Per l'erba e nell'erba e come l'erba ho vissuto e vivrò."[87]

Isn't this exactly the form of life that Niobe lives as a rock and in the rock on Mt. Sipylos, exposed to her own tears in the form of running water and rough weather. As an emblem of human grief and suffering she will finally decompose and transcend into pure nature.

The Multidimensional and Integral View on Niobe through the Lens of Julia Kristeva: Maternity and Psychoanalysis

Julia Kristeva, born in 1941 in Bulgaria and emigrated to Paris, has attracted wide intellectual attention through her integrative approach of combining linguistics, literary studies, own artistic writing, and psychoanalysis.[88] In a daringly enlightening cultural and feminist perspective, which met much criticism by the more mainstream feminism as biologic essentialism, Kristeva's main focus has been the reintroduction and reconsideration of motherhood and pregnancy as the vital web of embodied psychological experience in the complex and folded lives particularly of women both in the past and the modern world.[89] According to Kristeva's most inspiring and experimental text *Stabat Mater*, "… a mother-woman is rather a strange 'fold' (*pli*) which turns nature into culture, and the 'speaking subject' (*le parlant*) into biology. Although it affects each woman's body, this heterogeneity, which cannot be subsumed by the signifier, literally explodes with

86. Agamben 2017, 166-167.

87. Agamben 2017, 167. See Lucci 2019, 10-12.

88. I used here especially Kristeva 1980; Kristeva 1982; Kristeva 1985; Kristeva 1987; Kristeva 1989; Kristeva 2018a. See also Kritzman 1991; Ziarek 1992; Söderbäck 2010; Oliver 2013.

89. See Schmitz 2007; Wahrig 2008; Oliver 2008-10; Dunn 2015; Rendtorff 2016.

pregnancy – the dividing line between nature and culture – and with the arrival of the child – which frees a woman from uniqueness and gives her a chance, albeit not a certainty, of access to the other, to the ethical. These peculiarities of the maternal body make a woman a creature of folds, a catastrophe of being that cannot be subsumed by the dialectic of the trinity or its supplements."[90]

Maternity to her is the key to gain a better understanding of how the human mind and soul work. Her main goal is to reach new insights into the process of psychic maturation of the individuum and the human species in general. For reasons of space, I can mention only briefly some major points in her wide-ranging network of theory which I will outline in a longer study. Her main concern one could summarize as "Mothers matter". A precondition of all human thinking is her somewhat female *chora*, the maternal vessel or container, the theoretical third position or *l'autre* in the self, from where everything originates. As mothers undergo pregnancy as a deeply bodily and psychic experience with their babies, the semiotic – as heterologic, non-linguistic, vegetative basis, rhythm, and embodied life-flow – is a prerequisite for the symbolic dimension for any human being. At the same time, both levels, the semiotic and the symbolic, go hand in hand and are neatly interlaced in anyone's language and thinking in a diachronic process.[91] Mothers are closely connected with their babies, at a first stage in a narcissistic intimacy. In the miracle of maternal love mothers must give up the initial narcissism and detach themselves emotionally from their children just as babies must set out on their long journey of individuation. Daughters are even closer to their mothers. In two Oedipal steps they gradually reach maturity in ongoing abjections, bodily based reactions of horror and disgust, as well as in new incorporations of the abjects. Lacan, her teacher and model, argued for a mirror phase, where the baby as Narcissus experiences the fragmentation as the Other lacking the Self. The

90. Kristeva 1985, 149.
91. See Söderbäck 2010.

gap, according to him, is translated into the linguistic production of signs, the symbolic process in the gliding chain of the signifiers under the signified. Kristeva, on the contrary, introduces the concept of abjection, the ongoing psychic discharge of the mother and her body by the baby, when the semiotically produced absence is compensated through symbolic language combined with the acquisition of the law of the father. The mother must be killed metaphorically, her head severed. The daughter then identifies with her father and with the sexual desire of her mother to unite with him. As his rival she develops fantasies of violence against him. Thereafter, the frustrated desire is translated into language. In short, the psychic development is an ongoing back and forth of abjections of both mother and father. In this process of maturation all sorts of horror and violence occur in phantasmagoric images: death, cannibalistic devouring, pleasure in pain, blood, and tears. Mothers and their babies are thus subjects-in-process, signs and symptoms of estrangement in ongoing mutual adjustments.[92]

In this process of alienation, we witness the momentary foreclosure of the differentiation between subject and object, mother and child, while this necessary differentiation is indeed aspired in the long run. Abjection means emotional upheaval, love, self-sacrifice, masochism, desire, sexualized fantasies and phantoms, passion, mourning, grief, sorrow, depression, and melancholia. In discharging and remodeling abjection scenarios of violence, horror and loss must be sublimated into practices of art by successfully working through these experiences. In the end – and that is what is reminiscent of a more positive interpretation of Niobe – can stand serenity and a sensation of almost mystic unity between suffering and gratification, the bodily anchored rhythm of maternal love, reliance as passion and vocation.[93]

As said, motherhood matters, especially in the case of Niobe and Leto. They do not play a prominent role in Kristeva's work, unlike the Greek

92. See Oliver 2013; Dunn 2015.
93. Kristeva 2018b.

mythic figures of Narcissus, Medusa, or Oedipus. In *Stabat Mater,* the Virgin Mary serves as the main paradigm, whom Hegel had already contrasted with Niobe, another *mater dolorosa*.[94] I venture to argue that the key to understanding the myth of Niobe is the motherhood conceived in Kristeva's innovative perspectives on the maternal described as an "ambivalent principle"[95] or "weird feminine seesaw"[96] in permanent perturbation. Niobe can serve as the emblem of a mother who, confronted with all the phantasms of horror and abjection, is freezing in silence and does not succeed in overcoming the subject-object void. After witnessing the violent death of her children she loses any relation to an object of her love so that she becomes speechless. In a state of trauma and phobia she reverts to the stage of primary narcissism. In "Trauer und Melancholie" (1917) Freud thematized this regression to narcissism in long-termed depression and melancholia, the psychotic form of mourning, when a cannibalistic desire is observable which threatens to devour the I.[97] The repressed state of non-speech returns in images of violence and blood. On the other side, Niobe does not end in death but lives on and becomes – in Kristeva's sense of a new female "heretics" – a symbol of mute rebellion and of the inner bond of life, love, and death. In Kristeva's words, "*a-mort, amour*".[98]

In this psychoanalytical and maternal perspective, the myth of Niobe, already in Homer elaborated to full complexity, could be viewed as a reflection of the inner drama of the detachment process for both mother and child. But instead of fantasies of matricide, we encounter infanticide. However, the scenario is further enriched with the motif of an agonistic rivalry between two mothers over their female fertility. Another modification consists in the fact that the children are neither killed by Niobe herself nor by Leto in revenge or as retribution, but by Apollo and Artemis,

94. See above n. 248.
95. Kristeva 1985, 134.
96. Kristeva 1985, 148.
97. Freud 1999, GS X, 432; see also Kritzman 1991; Geisenhanslüke 2008.
98. Kristeva 1985, 152.

Leto's children. As some critics have noticed that the saga in the Homeric version is hardly just a story of transgression and punishment,[99] we could argue that it reflects the archaic concept of the transfer of evil, as elaborated by Simone Weil (1909-1943). A person suffering extreme pain wants to pass it on to his next fellow. Since not everyone feels the same about suffering, despite the stabilizing factor of this sinister mechanism, society enters a spiral of an economy of suffering that becomes unbearable. If in weakness and moral decadence nobody can feel pity or do harm to the neighbor anymore, people tend to attack the higher order. The chain of transfer can only be stopped, if a hero absorbs all evil, refusing to let it spread further.[100] In this specific case, Leto will somehow transfer the extreme toils and pains of her pregnancy and birth to her good friend Niobe. By rivaling the goddess, the happy and proud mother assumes the suffering. As Leto has felt the suffering in the most excessive way, she passes it on in an even worse manner. But the suffering and grief is so immense that Niobe absorbs all maternal pains. By her petrification she somehow becomes a sacrificial hero taking on the entire amount of suffering so that the chain of evil is broken. Yet the turmoil of the mother in the inner vertigo is so excessive that she cannot just die but must go on living as an emblem of maternity in the seesaw status. Niobe, petrified, mute, and speechless, is transformed into a myth, into *logos*, text, images, and art so that the *conditio materna* can be sublimated and made bearable.

99. Schmitz 2001, 152 n. 22; Benjamin 1921 = SW 1: 248.

100. See Nagy 2013, 167-168. In "Void and Compensation" (1947) (Weil 1947/2002, 5-9 and in Mile's anthology Weil 1986, 196-201; as excerpt see https://fleurmach.com/2016/03/03/simone-weil-void-and-compensation/), Weil says: "The wish to see others suffer exactly what we are suffering. It is because of this that, except in periods of social instability, the spite of those in misfortune is directed against their fellows. That is a factor making for social stability. The tendency to spread the suffering beyond ourselves. If through excessive weakness we can neither call forth pity nor do harm to others, we attack *what the universe itself represents for us*. Then every good or beautiful thing is like an insult." (Weil 1947/2002, 6 = Weil 1986, 197).

Conclusion

To sum up, it became evident what immense effect Niobe still has on us today. It is definitely possible to relate to her. Achilles used her as an example because he knew that Priam would feel a compulsion to react to Niobe. One reason why Achilles recurs to her is probably the fact that he himself has a rather close, almost narcissistic relation to his mother Thetis. In the safe distance of partial similarity and difference in matters of gender, Priam responds to the social appeal of the example. As a loving father, he still treasures his deep love, which united him with his mother, and he bears in mind his individual drama of detachment from her in his personal history of individuation. Both are inscribed in his inner psyche and body through an ongoing zigzag signification in the interlace of the semiotic and symbolic. Moreover, the vibrant knot of potential meanings is so rich in possible associations that a supposedly rather secondary passage becomes central for the understanding of the *Iliad* and the course of events in the last rhapsody.

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Athena Kavoulaki

THE SO-CALLED ALLEGORICAL FIGURE OF THE LITAI IN *ILIAD* 9

Introductory overview

In the world of the epics non-human agency is ubiquitous and drastic. The epic narrator discerns (and declares) Zeus' agency behind the entire course of events in the *Iliad* (1. 5), while the heroic protagonists seem to possess a distinctive alertness which enables them to perceive and comply with divine action as manifested in their world.[1] This task, however, is far from easy, since the manifestation of the divine in the human world might acquire multiple shapes and forms.[2] One of the most intriguing non-human (yet anthropomorphically conceived) figures that is suggestive of the intricate ways in which divine agency could play a role in the human world of the heroes is the figure of Λιταί ('Entreaties', 'Prayers', 'Supplications') in the ninth book of the *Iliad* (9. 499-523). Both the book itself and the speech of Phoenix (which contains the graphic representation of the Litai) have received severe criticism in the past by Analysts who disputed their integral place in the text of the *Iliad*.[3] Nowadays, however, under the weight of oral criticism, questions of 'textual authenticity' do not

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1. Exempli gratia: *Il.* 1. 199-200 (Achilles), 6.123-129, 142-143 (Diomedes), *Od.* 3. 165-66 (Nestor), 6.149-150, (Odysseus), 17. 484-87 (one of the suitors).

2. See also Carvounis in this volume.

3. Page 1972, 297-315 is a proponent of this view and summarizes earlier literature on the subject. However disputed, the speech (and especially the Litai exemplum) has always attracted deep admiration for its poetic quality (Hainsworth 1993, 57).

sound particularly relevant and the whole issue of epic composition has been placed under new light.[4] Thus, in modern discussions of the *Iliad* the speech of Phoenix figures prominently and is generally approached as an established part of the embassy scene, which displays obvious correspondences to other speech scenes in the *Iliad*.[5]

Phoenix' discourse is long and can be divided into three parts: the first part is Phoenix' own life adventure (445-95), a narration which provides the legitimizing basis for Phoenix' role as a mentor and advisor of Achilles.[6] The other two parts include his two exempla i.e., the two paradigmatic cases which illustrate his point (namely that Achilles should change his stance and accept Agamemnon's offer). The longer exemplum is the famous tale of Meleager (529-99). Before focusing on Meleager, however, Phoenix attempts to illustrate the importance of changing one's mind under the weight of entreaties and, to do so, he narrates a shorter piece of generalizing theological reflection (often termed as a 'parable' i.e., a generalizing story with a didactic dimension)[7] on the power of Entreaties in the world. This combination of 'parable' and specific exemplum occurs in oth-

4. This holds for most readers and students of the *Iliad* nowadays (and it is reflected in all handbooks); exceptions (e.g. Lucarini 2019) who remain impenitently loyal to the Analyst methods (neglecting all scholarship on oral criticism) simply prove the rule; see Crane's review (Crane 2021). On recent combinations of methods see Montanari, Rengakos, Tsagalis 2012; Burgess 2017 (with reference to Phoenix' speech).

5. From a Unitarian perspective the speech has been defended in the past and more recently, while correspondences have been often suggested (from various perspectives); e.g. indicatively Schadewaldt 1938, 130-50; Lohmann 1970, 245-65; Rosner 1976; Held 1987; Alden 2000, 219ff. From an oral perspective Martin 1989 and Nagy 1999 [1979], 102-11, Nagy 1992 are important (on speeches and exempla in *Il.* 9); also Burgess 2017 (combining orality and narratology); Grethlein 2006, 46-63 on exempla discourses in the *Iliad* (from a narratological perspective).

6. In the autobiographical part Phoenix' intimacy with Achilles and his role as a father-figure (and thus with an authority to advise him) are reasserted. For other views on this first part of the speech see e.g. Schein 1984. 111; Rosner 1976, 318; Held 1987, 247-249.

7. Held 1987 uses 'parable', a term used by others too e.g. by Alden (Alden 2000, 14) who offers a typology of para-narratives according to which the Litai narrative can be characterized as *ainos* (Alden 2000, 11, 30ff.).

er scenes which contain important speeches:[8] more specifically it occurs in the speech of Agamemnon to Achilles and the Achaeans at the assembly in *Il*. 19 (78-144), as well as in the first speech of Achilles to Priam in *Iliad* 24. In *Iliad* 9 Phoenix' speech contains the parable of the Entreaties (502-12) and the paradigmatic story of Meleager (529-99); in *Iliad* 19 Agamemnon's speech includes a parable about Ate (91-4) and a paradigmatic story about Ate (95-144); and in *Iliad* 24 Achilleus' speech contains the parable of Zeus' Jars and a paradigmatic story about Peleus (534-42) which is enriched by the paradigmatic story of Niobe a little later (24. 602-615). In the cases of the parables of Agamemnon and Achilles the speakers seem to utilize popular and traditional concepts of divine powers and divine action.[9] Phoenix' story of the Litai, however, seems to be a more isolated case,[10] and as such it has been taken into account mainly for its moral implications.[11]

8. As Held 1987 has shown.

9. Ate as an external daemonic power (affecting humans) is a recurrent idea in early poetry: see e.g. Hesiod *Th*. 230 and West 1966 *ad loc*.; Dodds' famous discussion (Dodds 1951, 1-27) is relevant here; see also Padel 1995, 189ff. on Ate in post-Homeric poetry. The image of the divine jars (with good and evils) is familiar also to Hesiod (*Erga* 90-104) and mentioned by various poets and writers (e.g. Pindar *P*. 3.80-81, Plato *Rep*. 379d etc); see Richardson 1993 *ad loc*. For Plato's understanding of Homer's discourse on Ate (in *Il*. 19) from a theological perspective see *Symp*. 195d; the parable of the Litai is also mentioned repeatedly in the Platonic corpus (cf. also Labarbe 1949, 219f.).

10. Exempla have often been seen as poetic 'innovations' (e.g. Willcock 1964, 1977; Braswell 1971) or even as interpolations (usually by Analysts as mentioned above; e.g. Ameis, Hentze 1877, 101ff.). My understanding has been informed by more orality-orientated readings (see above n. 0). Nagy's remark that 'the exemplum demands a mentality of the unchanging' (Nagy 1992, 326) has pertinence to my approach.

11. See indicatively Thornton 1984, 113ff.; Arietti 1988-1989; Hainsworth 1993, 55-57 & ad 501; Griffin 1995, Yamagata 1991. The moral dimension is accentuated when the story of the Litai is characterized as an 'allegory' (a longstanding practice with roots in the ancient scholiastic tradition). As a rhetorical / stylistic feature allegory implies a sharp and clear distinction between the notion 'entreaty' and the entities 'Entreaties' created by the poet. Such a distinction can hardly hold in early Greek poetry (West 1966, 33 [mentioned also below]; Fränkel 1973, 53ff.; Padel 1995, 169) and for this reason modern formulations are usually nuanced; e.g. Hainsworth 1993 ad 499: 'A kind of allegory (as *we* would call it)' (emphasis mine); but the use of the term persists (e.g. Griffin 1995, 43 or Schröder 2004)

Given the parallel with the other generalizing and theologizing 'parables' (in the other two speeches), it is worth approaching the representation of the Litai from the point of view of traditional discourses on divine powers, as a kind of 'myth' (as West aptly calls it[12]), of storytelling along traditional lines. In this particular case Phoenix' theologizing discourse seems to focus on a 'game of powers' in the broader cosmic order which involves and relates to the socio-political human order. The following analysis will pursue this line of thought that allows us to note features of the discourse that underlie the divine status of the Litai and to appreciate better the complex aspects and features attributed to these entities that manifest the role of the divine. At the same time, this approach clarifies the interaction between the human and the non-human agents by focusing on the imagery of movement that is deployed by Phoenix. It is through this imagery that Phoenix' discourse seems to indicate the terms in which this interaction can be effective (or not/ or dysfunctional). Highlighting the Litai as divine agents places their interaction with humans under a new light: it presents it as an event of cosmic order in which human agents can have an active role. From this perspective divine agency becomes an important factor in the politics of human affairs.

It is worth noticing that in the embassy scene it is Phoenix who first characterizes the Achaeans' request to Achilles to return to battle as a form of *lissesthai* (a form of supplication or entreaty). This suggestion has been usually interpreted as a means of moral pressure on Achilles.[13] The mor-

by convention perhaps (or by conviction). The discourse on the Litai goes beyond the level of an effective rhetorical representation, as I shall try to show.

12. West 1997, 373 (noting that this myth of the personified Prayers and Ate is in the spirit of Semitic poetry).

13. E.g. Thornton 1984, 113ff.; Hainsworth 1993, 57; Alden 2000, 11, 35, 199ff.. It will become apparent that my approach is different. I particularly distance myself from monolithic approaches (e.g. Pedrick 1982, 132 n. 28 'the passage states that Zeus punishes with ἄτη any man who fails to listen to prayers') and generally from readings that see unavoidable retribution from Zeus or punishment imposed upon Achilles for rejecting the Litai of the Embassy).

al dimension cannot be denied, but it may not exhaust the significance of Phoenix' contribution (mainly his reference to the Litai), especially if approached in theologizing/ mythologizing terms and from a perspective of symbolic interaction. Seen from this point of view, the exemplum of the Litai may be a discursive strategy deployed by Phoenix to empower Achilles with an insight into supplicatory politics and to implicate him as a political agent in the challenging context of a socio-religious procedure that can guarantee alliances of a superior level.[14] It is important that *lissesthai* (mainly in the form of a fuller verbal-practical procedure of supplication but also in the basic verbal form of prayers and entreaties) belongs to the ritual resources available to Greek communities for debating and arranging their place in the wider world as well as the distribution and relations of power in the social world.[15] In the context of such resources divine agency and human agency interact manifoldly. The myth of the Litai affords an interesting understanding of the possible interaction between the human and the non-human in the world, an interaction that may have an important political dimension (apart from the moral one) that is made more palpable through imagery related to feet and movement. Phoenix produces a mythology of the Litai along traditional lines and captures their inherent potential that lies in its most ambivalent traits (especially its χωλότης).

Detailed analysis

Upon completing his narration on his own life adventure (9. 495), Phoenix uses a strong ἀλλά (9. 496), in order to mark a shift of focus: he turns to

14. In *Il.* 19 Agamemnon explores the parable of *Ate* in order to press an analogy between himself and Zeus; the religiously-drawn analogy has political implications.

15. Gould 1973 is classical; also (indicatively) Naiden 2016; Zartaloudis 2019. Supplication in Homer from a literary point of view: Pedrick 1982; Thornton 1984; Crotty 1994. Letoublon 2011 supports the ritual character of prayers and supplications in the *Iliad* (and insists – against Aubriot-Sevin 1992 - that *lissesthai* is a supplication verb and not a prayer verb). In *Iliad* 9 *lissesthai* covers the whole spectrum of broad signification: it is interchangeable with *euchesthai* in two cases (in the sense of 'praying') but retains the associations of movement and practice throughout. I am using it in this broad, 'flexible' sense.

Achilles and asks him to 'tame his heart', to change his unrelenting stance towards the Achaeans. His imperative (δάμασον 9. 496) implies intense request or entreaty.[16] The powerful influence of entreating words and acts (says Phoenix) affects even the gods who do not remain implacable but prove pliable. To justify his assertion, Phoenix goes on narrating the parable or rather the myth of the Litai. The text runs as follows:

ἀλλ' Ἀχιλεῦ δάμασον θυμὸν μέγαν: οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ 496
νηλεὲς ἦτορ ἔχειν: στρεπτοὶ δέ τε καὶ θεοὶ αὐτοί,
τῶν περ καὶ μείζων ἀρετὴ τιμή τε βίη τε.
καὶ μὲν τοὺς θυέεσσι καὶ εὐχωλῇς ἀγανῇσι
λοιβῇ τε κνίσῃ τε παρατρωπῶσ' ἄνθρωποι 500
λισσόμενοι, ὅτε κέν τις ὑπερβήῃ καὶ ἁμάρτῃ.
καὶ γάρ τε Λιταί εἰσι Διὸς κοῦραι μεγάλοιο
χωλαί τε ῥυσαί τε παραβλῶπές τ' ὀφθαλμώ,
αἵ ῥά τε καὶ μετόπισθ' ἄτης ἀλέγουσι κιοῦσαι.
ἡ δ' Ἄτη σθεναρή τε καὶ ἀρτίπος, οὕνεκα πάσας
πολλὸν ὑπεκπροθέει, φθάνει δέ τε πᾶσαν ἐπ' αἶαν
βλάπτουσ' ἀνθρώπους: αἳ δ' ἐξακέονται ὀπίσσω.
ὅς μέν τ' αἰδέσεται κούρας Διὸς ἄσσον ἰούσας,
τὸν δὲ μέγ' ὤνησαν καί τ' ἔκλυον εὐχομένοιο:
ὅς δέ κ' ἀνήνηται καί τε στερεῶς ἀποείπῃ, 510
λίσσονται δ' ἄρα ταί γε Δία Κρονίωνα κιοῦσαι
τῷ ἄτην ἅμ' ἕπεσθαι, ἵνα βλαφθεὶς ἀποτίσῃ.
ἀλλ' Ἀχιλεῦ πόρε καὶ σὺ Διὸς κούρῃσιν ἕπεσθαι
τιμήν, ἥ τ' ἄλλων περ ἐπιγνάμπτει νόον ἐσθλῶν.
εἰ μὲν γὰρ μὴ δῶρα φέροι τὰ δ' ὄπισθ' ὀνομάζοι
Ἀτρεΐδης, ἀλλ' αἰὲν ἐπιζαφελῶς χαλεπαίνοι,
οὐκ ἄν ἔγωγέ σε μῆνιν ἀπορρίψαντα κελοίμην
Ἀργείοισιν ἀμυνέμεναι χατέουσί περ ἔμπης:

16. The imperative is used for 'requests, entreaties, summons, prescriptions, exhortations etc': Smyth 1920, 409.

νῦν δ' ἅμα τ' αὐτίκα πολλὰ διδοῖ τὰ δ' ὄπισθεν ὑπέστη,
ἄνδρας δὲ λίσσεσθαι ἐπιπροέηκεν ἀρίστους 520
κρινάμενος κατὰ λαὸν Ἀχαιϊκόν, οἵ τε σοὶ αὐτῷ
φίλτατοι Ἀργείων: τῶν μὴ σύ γε μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς
μηδὲ πόδας: πρὶν δ' οὔ τι νεμεσσητὸν κεχολῶσθαι. 523

But Achilles, tame your mighty passion. It is not at all right to have a pitiless heart. Even the gods themselves can be swayed, although their majesty and honour and strength are much greater. And yet men move them by sacrifices and humble prayers and libations and burnt offerings, entreating them when someone has stepped too far and transgressed.

«*For Litai ('Entreaties/ Supplication Prayers'), are also daughters of great Zeus, lame and wrinkled and squint-eyed. Slowly and carefully, they toil on their way and are left behind Ate ('Ruin/ Folly/ Mischief'). Ate is strong, and sound on her feet, and she far outruns all the Litai, and she first does harm to men all over the earth. And the Litai follow as healers after her. Whoever respects the daughters of Zeus as they come near, he receives great help from them, and they hear his prayers. But if a man denies them and harshly turns them away, they go to Zeus the son of Kronos and entreat him that Ate should follow that man, that he may be injured and so make full requital. Achilles, could you also provide the honour that bends the minds of men, even of the great ones, to the Maidens, so that it attends and follows them? For if the son of Atreus were not bringing gifts, and naming more to come but was forever raging terribly, I should not be asking you to cast aside your anger and help the Argives, even though they are in need. But now he is offering many gifts straightaway, and has promised others to come later, and he has sent forth the best men to entreat you, choosing them from the Achaean army, the ones dearest to you among the Argives. Do not scorn their words, or the steps of their journey; before that there could be no blame for your anger*».

In the English translation above Ate and Litai are left untranslated as proper names, given that in the Homeric passage both abstract nouns (*litai*, *ate*) become animate beings and acquire anthropomorphic traits

and behaviour.[17] In other words, they are both personified and are given roles in Phoenix's short exposition. This amplification of Phoenix's rhetoric through personification has made Homer's readers (especially modern readers, as it was mentioned above) see this passage as a kind of allegory i.e., a narrative involving personifications deliberately in order to make a didactic point. Personification is indeed a rhetorical device and as such it appears in late rhetorical handbooks under the term προσωποποιΐα.[18] However, personifying or deifying abstract nouns was not simply a textual rhetorical figure in Antiquity.[19] It was also a mode of thought, a cultural phenomenon with deep roots in Indo-european and Eastern traditions. Burkert saw it as a kind of religious 'language', an 'Aegean-Eastern Koine'.[20] In the context of this tradition divinized abstractions populated the entire cosmos and could grow into fully individualized gods. The

17. The terms are printed with initial capital letter in modern critical editions as proper names; they also constitute ordinary substantive nouns. Rendering them into English (or even into Modern Greek) is not easy. In English translations of this passage the term 'Litai' appears as 'entreaties', 'prayers', 'supplications', even 'apologies'. The basic meaning of the term λιτή is 'prayer' or entreaty. From the same root we have the verbal derivative λίσσομαι which means 'beg', 'pray', 'supplicate'. Both terms are used to express requests more or less formally to gods or (more broadly) to humans (λίσσομαι seems to be more closely related to supplication; see above n. 0). Λιτή, ευχή, ίκετεία / ίκεσία are near-synonyms, denoting forms of requests often in ritual contexts, at varying degrees of intensity and through various means (involving both word and action); Pulleyn 1997, 56-69. ἄτη on the other hand is a notoriously difficult term and concept which has a broad range of signification involving infatuation, blindness or delusion sent by gods, mischief, ruin, disaster. The related verbal form is ἀάω, appearing often in middle aorist ἀασάμην. Cairns 2012 discusses semantics and examines the notion of *ate* in the epics comprehensively.

18. Demetrius *De Eloc*. 2.65 seems to be the earlier sources; see Stafford 2000, 4-8 on the sources and generally her discussion of personification and abstract divinities; also Stafford and Herrin 2005 on the phenomenon in the Greek world. It is interesting that the ancient scholia (Sch. D/A ad I 502) and the byzantine scholar Eustathius (767), commenting on the passage above, characterize the poet's technique here as εἰδωλοποιΐα (a vivid depiction in words).

19. As West noted in his commentary on Hesiod's *Theogony* about abstractions: 'they are invisible, imperishable, and have great influence over human affairs; they must be gods' (West 1966, 33).

20. Burkert 2005. On personifications also Burkert 1985, 184-186.

Indo-Iranian god Mithras, whose name means contract, is an exemplary case.[21] Hesiod's world abounds in abstract divinities (or in deified geographical and natural elements). Many of them may not have had an established cult (according to the surviving evidence at least). But this does not make them less divine or something different; they are all part of Zeus' order and they are interrelated to the other gods. They are not treated as a separate category. Phoenix' story has been judged a piece of 'Hesiodic style in the Iliad' and the Litai in particular have often been compared with Hesiod's Dike (Justice) in the *Works and Days*.[22] It should be noted that neither Hesiod's Dike nor the Litai are simple personifications.[23] They are both deified abstracts, they are divinized.

Tzetzes, the 12th century scholar who commented upon Hesiod's *Works and Days* interprets the passage on Dike and makes interesting remarks regarding Greek polytheism:

> *Ἰστέον ὅτι πάντα οἱ Ἕλληνες, ἃ δύναμιν ἔχοντα ἑώρων, οὐκ ἄνευ ἐπιστασίας θεῶν τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῶν ἐνεργεῖν ἐνόμιζον. ἑνὶ δὲ ὀνόματι τό τε τὴν δύναμιν ἔχον καὶ τὸν ἐπιστατοῦντα τούτῳ θεὸν ὠνόμαζον.*
>
> *We should note that the Greeks believed that in everything which they saw as possessing a power that power did not act without the authority of the gods, and they called both the thing possessing the power and the god set over it by one name.*

As Tzetzes asserts, the δύναμις, the special power invested in various phenomena in the world, would attract religious attention and would be re-

21. Stressed by Burkert (above).

22. Noe 1940; Aubriot-Sevin 1984; Hainsworth 1993 ad 511. Dike appears also in Solon's fr. 4 (32-39) with analogies to Dike in Hesiod (*Theogony* 902-903; *Erga* 217ff) or to the divine guardian entities in Hesiod *Erga* 122-125, 252f. (see Noussia-Fantuzzi 2010, 238-242); all these divinized entities bear analogies to the Litai. In Solon's conception of Dike the political-religious dimension is most apparent.

23. There are pure personifications in the *Iliad*; e.g. in Il. 11. 574 '(*τὰ δὲ δοῦρα*) *λιλαιόμενα χροὸς ἆσαι*' (swords greedy of flesh).

lated to gods.[24] Abstract powers such as Hesiod's Dike were not excluded from such a worldview.

Phoenix' speech and especially his story of the Litai seems to converge with this broader perspective of traditional discourse on divine powers. He does not speak as a religious authority but as a person of wisdom (due to his old age and experience). He speaks in an admonitory style that follows the tradition of wisdom literature.[25] This particular characteristic of Phoenix's discourse does not speak against its integral place in the composition of the Iliad (especially b. 9).[26] It has been amply shown that the Iliad can accommodate various different types of discourses (or even genres).[27] The speeches in particular can differ in tone and style (even in language) in accordance with the character of the speaker and the general circumstances. It should not be overlooked (or forgotten) that the context of the action in the ninth book of the *Iliad* is markedly different from the dominant war conditions and open-air combat that constitute the major focus of the Iliadic narrative (and are displayed at length in books 2-8, 11-17, 20-22). In *Iliad* 9 human action unfolds during the night[28] and mainly in the closed space of the heroes' tents. Instead of the clash of the battle we have the exchange of words; even the gods do not interfere, mortals are left to their own resources of thoughts and ideas to settle their own affairs. In such a context *paraenesis* and *logoi* (in the sense of stories exemplifying and po-

24. A similar, concise statement on Litai and Ate in the ancient scholia ad I 502-3 (ὅσα κρατεῖ τῆς ἡμετέρας δυνάμεως, θεῖα ὠνόμαζον).

25. Noted already by Noe 1940 (mentioned also above); Diller 1962, 53-54 stresses the paraenetic aspect of both the Litai exemplum and the parable of the Jars in Il. 24. From this point of view Phoenix' insights may reflect a traditional understanding of socio-divine politics that are worth investigating.

26. Nor does it turn it into an 'invention' or innovation (see e.g. Ingalls 1982; & above n. 0).

27. See Martin 2005.

28. It is one of the three nights that receive narrative focus in the Iliad; the other two are the night of the 26th day, i.e., the night after Patroclus' death (dedicated to the construction of the new shield) and the night of the 39th day i.e., the night of Priam's supplication. The relevant books are 9, 18 and 24 – they have all been subjected to the Analysts' scrutiny.

tentially elucidating human and cosmic affairs) are fully in place. A closer examination of Phoenix' portrait of the Litai seems to suggest that the old pedagogue promotes (and proposes) a kind of socio-divine politics with Achilles as the primary human agent (co-working with other agents, human and divine).

I have used the word 'politics' deliberatively, because Phoenix' second exemplum explores political dynamics on a cosmic scale. His principal assertion is that human agency (through ritual entreaties) can affect and change the stance of gods, since gods themselves are open to change (στρεπτοί 9. 497), to interaction and communication (παρατρωπῶσ' ἄνθρωποι / λισσόμενοι 9. 500-501). This is a bold assertion but one that lies at the foundation of Greek cultic reality: λίσσεσθαι (λισσόμενοι 501) in the broad sense of formal request through ritual language and ritual action constitutes the primary channel for the formation of bonds of reciprocity and alliance with the gods. It is something remarkable and Phoenix acknowledges it. This important channel makes interaction and negotiation with the gods possible. It must be a power.

Phoenix is able to produce an account for the presence and effects of this power in the world, using the resources of mythology: genealogy, relations to major divinities, competition with other powers, honours etc.[29] On the basis of these traditional resources Phoenix produces a scenario in which Litai and Ate constitute the *named* characters but not the sole protagonists. An anonymous male subject (indicated by the pronoun ὅς 9. 508, 510) represents the category 'humans' (note ἀνθρώπους in the text 9. 507) and is given an important role in the narration. A fourth actor, i.e., Zeus the supreme god, is introduced as an important agent in the last stages of the narrative.

The principal character and focal point of the story is the figure of the Litai. Although many modern studies on this passage have devoted major

29. These aspects recur in mythical narratives and shape Greek perceptions about gods; note Herodotus' famous saying in his *Histories* 2. 65; generally on the epic mythical material Burkert 1985, 121-25.

attention to Ate,[30] my own interest lies in the Litai who are actually the *raison d'être* of the whole account. It is around their figure that the narration is structured: it starts with the name and the genealogy of the Litai (they are daughters of Zeus 9. 502); it continues with the physical traits of the Litai (χωλαί, ῥυσαί, παραβλῶπες; all in one line 9. 503); third comes their competitor who is no other than Ate (their sister, another daughter of Zeus as we hear in Iliad 19. 91-94); then, we have their function in the human world (a section which extends to four lines[31]); finally, the story concludes with their role on Olympus, as supplicators of Zeus for the restitution of their honour in the human world (through Ate).[32]

In this succinct but all-inclusive narrative Phoenix carves the mythical portrait of the Litai, presenting them comprehensively and in a dynamic form: it is often said that the Litai bear the traits of the shameful mortal suppliants (their unstable, disgraceful walk, their frowned face and depressed look, their inability to look straight in the eyes).[33] However, apart from bearing the bodily marks of suffering, the divine Litai are able to he-

30. Mainly because it relates to the thorny question whether Achilles is affected (or threatened to be affected) by Ate or not, on which the answers vary; e.g. Thornton 1984, 132, Arietti 1988-89, 4, Alden 2000, 261-63 are more inclined to see Achilles affected in some way by Ate; Yamagata 1991 is skeptical and Crotty 1994, 61 critical of views of Achilles' punishment (rightly to my mind); Yamagata 2005 (Achilles not victim but agent of Ate); Cairns 2012 (different perspective).

31. Or perhaps five, if we add l. 513 on the honours due to the Litai by mortals.

32. Similar is Dike's reaction in Hesiod *Erga* 258ff. (see also above n. 22)

33. As noted by both ancient scholiasts and modern interpreters of the scene (mentioned in previous footnotes), who dwell on the associations; I cite only an indicative example of ancient allegoresis (on which see Russell, Konstan 2005): Heraclitus, *Homeric Problems* 37.1-5: «*Ἐν δὲ τούτοις τοῖς ἔπεσι τὸ τῶν ἱκετευόντων σχῆμα διαπέπλασται. Πᾶσα γὰρ οὖν συνείδησις ἁμαρτόντος ἀνθρώπου βραδεῖα, καὶ μόλις οἱ δεόμενοι τοῖς ἱκετευομένοις προσέρχονται, τὴν αἰδῶ κατὰ ῥῆμα μετροῦντες. οὔτε μὴν ἀτρεμὲς δεδόρκασιν, ἀλλ' ὀπίσω τὰς τῶν ὀμμάτων βολὰς ἀποστρέφουσι. Καὶ μὴν ἔν γε τοῖς πρώτοις οὐδὲν γεγηθὸς τῶν ἱκετευόντων ἡ διάνοια περιτίθησιν ἔρευθος ἀλλ' ὠχρὰ κατηφὴς διὰ τῆς πρώτης ὄψεως ἐκκαλουμένη τὸν ἔλεον. Ὅθεν εὐλόγως οὐ τὰς Διὸς θυγατέρας, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἱκετεύοντας πεφήνατο «χωλούς τε ῥυσούς τε παραβλῶ πάς τ' ὀφθαλμώ»*. (Such associations have led to analogies between the figure of the Litai and the situation of the Achaean embassy in the bibliography. But Phoenix' narration seems to have broader implications, as argued here.)

al them (9. 507). Apart from uttering entreaties, they are able to hear and fulfil prayers (9. 509). And apart from approaching mortals, the Litai can abandon mortals and form a direct contact with Zeus (9. 511). The power, then, of the Litai is manifold, it extends either way to mortals and immortals and seems to be the product of intense interaction. This dynamic conception and depiction of their power is served in the text by an emphasis on the imagery of movement (a device that seems to articulate the narration of the whole second exemplum). Although the Litai, the entreaties, may represent a language phenomenon, their effects seem to be concretized in bodily and proxemic terms, which are worth examining.[34]

A first striking issue concerning Phoenix' portayal of the Litai is the attribution of unattractive physical traits to these creatures. They are χωλαί, ῥυσαί & παραβλῶπες (lame, wrinkled and squint-eyed). These features (which are usually interpreted as a reflection of the posture and face expression of a suppliant, as it was mentioned above)[35] are not simply ugly but represent body deformities. Recently, D. Bonano emphasized that in the context of Greek anthropomorphism divine infirmity (like lameness) is a distinct way of expressing the special place and competences of a divine power.[36] In the Homeric text under discussion the physical incapacities of the Litai seem to relate both to their special power in the human world and to their intricate interaction with humans. More specifically, the infirmity of the Litai seems to be expressed mainly through χωλότης (lameness), which is the first trait mentioned (9. 503) and which has to do with their feet and hence with their movement. The wrinkles on their face (ῥυσαί) may be both a mark of suffering and fatigue (due to their limping) or a mark of old age, a 'handicap' by itself which would further hinder their

34. The imagery and proxemics of symbolic communication in the scene have not been analysed in the bibliography (the usual emphasis lies on psychology and ethics).

35. See previous note. It is worth stressing that there are numerous speculations both in Eustathius and other ancient scholiasts, as well as in modern interpretations. In my analysis below I draw attention to aspects which have not been so discussed.

36. Bonano 2019.

movement. At the same time, the Litai seem to have a problematic eyesight (denoted by *παραβλῶπες* 9. 503), another feature which complicates their moving around.[37] Taken together, the three features seem to undercut their ability to move. In their earthly whereabouts, they walk slowly and with heed (*ἀλέγουσαι κιοῦσαι* 9. 504) but they are always left behind their sister Ate (who is strong and sound of foot and manages to disable mortals (note *βλάπτουσα* 'disabling' 9. 507).[38] Nonetheless, as the text hastens to suggest, the disability of the Litai becomes a kind of prerogative: coming late and after the injury caused by Ate, they have occasion to manifest their potential as healers, i.e., their capacity to heal the injury. If they manage to restitute what Ate has caused they prove (implicitly and eventually) superior to Ate. Their infirmity becomes their strength.

The reference to the healing potential of the Litai is emblematically formulated in the text: it occupies a clean-cut hemistich consisting of three words filled with alliteration of vowels (*αἳ δ' ἐξακέονται ὀπίσσω* 9. 507). It is immediately after this emphatic reference that the narrative part with the mortal subjects follows. This section highlights the field in which the power of the Litai can be made manifest, and as it happens it is the field of social action and interaction The terms in which this interaction is sketched suggest an intricate interplay between human and non-human (deified) entities. The key-element is the imagery of movement. More particularly, after Ate's strong-footed passage from earth, the Litai enter the scene but they do not impose themselves: they draw closer to the human victims at their slow and heedful pace. The phrase *ἆσσον ἰοῦσας* ('coming closer' 9. 508) brings forth their slow approach and calls to mind the meaning of

37. *Παραβλῶπες* calls to mind *παραβλέπω*, which is another aspect of the goddesses' power which I will comment on below.

38. The basic meaning of βλάπτω is 'hinder, disable' with particular reference to the feet (LSJ[9] *s.v.*). Richardson (1993, 107) suggests that in relation to divine powers *blaptein* has a more metaphorical sense and refers more to harming the mind. In this case, however, with the intense emphasis on foot imagery the physical aspect can hardly be denied. Cf. also Padel who disputes the division between concrete and metaphorical: 'mental, you might say, *is* physical' (Padel 1995, 169).

ἱκνεῖσθαι ('approaching', 'arriving') which is cognate with *ἱκέτης*, i.e., the suppliant, who is literally the 'comer' or the 'arriving one'. In this case the approaching figures are the χωλαί, *ῥυσαί* & *παραβλῶπες* Litai, a group of feminine entities constituting an unusual spectacle that may have caused mixed reactions. The unusual impression of such a divine appearance is particularly emphasized in the text through the unusual diction deployed for the description of the figures and through the unusual rhythm of the verses. Two of the adjectives used for the Litai (*ῥυσαί, παραβλῶπες*) are hapax legomena and their combination is unique;[39] on the level of scansion the verse is also uncommon as it begins with a double spondee, a fact which gives its rhythm a dragging, limping tone.[40] Both the mental picture and the concrete verbal and aural poetics of the Litai description convey the atypical or rather paradoxical form of these exceptional creatures. The limping of the Litai is inscribed in the text and during the oral recitation of the passage this aspect would be much more pronounced. In all their infirmity the Litai manage to make a strong impression and to attract attention, even though reactions can be complex.

In this context the gender and physical traits of the personified Litai may acquire added significance. It is interesting that extremes of good and evil are represented in female form in Greek poetry and culture. Values and virtues are normally personified or deified as beautiful, young female entities, embodying what is desirable to a Greek male citizen (Charites, Eirene, Homonoia are some indicative examples).[41] At the opposite end

39. The passage on the whole is minimally repetitive; *ὑπεκπροθέει* is used only once more in the *Iliad* and once in the *Odyssey* (Φ 604, θ125) and the same holds for *ἐξακέονται* (Δ 36, γ 145). These and other unusual linguistic features (mentioned *passim* in my analysis) have long been noticed and raised Analytic suspicion (e.g. Leaf 1900 on the passage) or have been interpreted as innovation, addition etc. (e.g. Ingalls 1982).

40. Cf. Demetrius *De Eloc*. 7. 6 'Homer represents the Prayers as wrinkled and lame in allusion to their tardiness, which is tantamount to saying their length of speech' (*μακρολογία*). This 'tardiness' is expressed through the long rhythm too.

41. On which see Stafford 2000.

we have the various female monsters like Skylla.[42] The case of the Litai is different from both these extremes: with their wrinkles, squint-eyes and lameness they can hardly be desirable; Greek standards of beauty considered lameness particularly unattractive in the case of women (as it is suggested by the story of Corinthian Labda in Herodotus 5. 92). On the other hand, deformities could signal something ominous or uncanny (a quality related to portents); strange features in general, as well as strangers such as beggars would call for reactions of *aidos* or pity (according to Greek moral standards).[43] To be turned into a beggar, Odysseus had to be bodily disfigured by Athena in those areas that correspond to the deformities of the Litai: he acquired wrinkles, old age, faint eyes and a staff to lean on (13. 430-38, 17. 201-203).[44] With all these features he should be treated with aidos.[45] In fact, his appearance proved to be a challenge to the suitors who could not hide their hybristic behavior (17. 462-65), even though some of them showed pity and restraint (17. 367, 483-87). Under the weight of all these considerations it becomes apparent that the figure of the Litai is constructed as an ambivalent spectacle. While the imagery of their approach suggests that their involvement in human affairs operates as an open call to interaction and reception, this 'invitation' is challenging due to their ambivalent form.[46]

In Phoenix' narration the challenge is perhaps accentuated, given that the recipient of this ambivalent spectacle is a mortal man (the one affected by Ate's rushing action and subjected to her *blaptein*) and there are no oth-

42. Discussed by CHRISTOPOULOS in this volume.

43. CAIRNS 1993, 105ff., 119.

44. In the *Odyssey* lameness is not explicitly mentioned but implied through the leaning on the staff. Lameness is generally a quality of the beggar: see Asius fr. 14 West 'lame, branded, wizened with age, like a beggar he came'.

45. CAIRNS 1993, 107. In the Odyssean text the (implied and expected) *aidos* of the *enaisimoi* ('righteous ones' 17. 363) contrasts to Antinous' *hybris* (strongly disapproved); others react with pity and *thambos* (17. 367).

46. ALDEN 2000, 206-207 also notices the ambiguity of the Litai but she stresses their menacing side, as she combines it with the aspect of moral warning & moral consequences she perceives dominant. (I focus more on the themes of limping/ wounding and healing.)

er viewers or attendants to this intricate encounter.[47] The two parties seem to enter a process of contact and communication of a reciprocal nature. The ambivalent spectacle of the limping Litai reflects in a way the tokens of the inflicted injury, attempting a slow and cautious approach, both expressing and partaking of the trauma.

Confronted by such an approach, humans can react in diverse ways, which are sketched by Phoenix. If the mortal man stands in awe (*αἰδέσεται*) in front of these impaired figures and lets them draw near at their slow pace (*ἆσσον ἰοῦσας* 'coming closer' 508), a community between them is built: the mortal man profits from their closeness and vicinity, as the Litai (embodiments of entreaties) can hear the mortal's prayers and entreaties (*ἔκλυον εὐχομένοιο* 509) and offer him benefits (*μέγ' ὤνησαν* 509). Their favour outdoes past injuries. The choice of εὔχεσθαι is telling at this point: *εὔχεσθαι* is the technical term for entreaties in the context of prayers to the gods. The use of this verb at this point of the narrative suggests that in this context of communication the Litai have acquired their full divine capacities. If at the beginning of Phoenix's myth the Litai seemed to be associated with *ἄνθρωποι λισσόμενοι*, humans uttering prayers, imploring and supplicating to sway the gods (according to 9. 501), at this point of the narration the Litai have grown to full divinities receiving and hearing prayers and supplications, in other words embodying *lissesthai* in a passive sense (as supplicated and not as suppliants).[48] Divine beings are conceived in these

47. Unlike the episode in Hesiod's *Works and Days* (220-224) where a multitude seems to be involved in (or stand and attend) the maltreatment of the deity (*τῆς δὲ Δίκης ῥόθος ἑλκομένης, ᾗ κ' ἄνδρες ἄγωσι δωροφάγοι, σκολιῇς δὲ δίκῃς κρίνωσι θέμιστας./ ἡ δ' ἕπεται κλαίουσα πόλιν καὶ ἤθεα λαῶν, / ἠέρα ἑσσαμένη, κακὸν ἀνθρώποισι φέρουσα*); cf. West 1978 *ad loc*.

48. The two participles (*lissomenoi* & *euchomenoi*) are used interchangeably in the text: *euchomai* represents the standard use (for prayers to the gods), while *lissesthai* (used in l. 501) stands as an unusual occurrence, which triggers Phoenix's mythical exemplum (it is the only time in Homer that this verb is applied to prayers made by mortals to gods, while in later poetic texts, e.g. Pindar, it is not uncommon in the sense of praying to gods). At all events, either as *lissomenoi* or *euchomenoi*, mortals are the supplicating/ imploring ones; on the other hand, the deified Litai can signify supplication in a dynamic sense: both as supplicat-

dynamic terms both in the epics and in Greek thought more generally; Phoenix follows this mode of thought, a fact which indicates that his reflection on the Litai surpasses the immediate analogies to the Achaean entreaties and expands on a broader scale.

The dynamic (and not one-sided) encounter with the Litai becomes more explicit in the second alternative of mortal reactions (9. 510): the mortal man may refuse to show respect and approval (*ἀνήνηται* [sc. *αἰδεῖσθαι*]) in front of the ambivalent convoy of the Litai (for all their visible infirmities) and he may even use harsh words (not entreating ones) to send them away (510). In this case, the Litai are even more clearly distanced from the human condition; they move to Olympus and establish a close contact with their father Zeus (through *λίσσεσθαι*),[49] entreating him that Ate (their competing sister) takes over 'at once' (*ἅμ'*), so that the mortal can be harmed and 'pay' for his harsh reaction (*τῷ ἄτην ἅμ' ἕπεσθαι, ἵνα βλαφθεὶς ἀποτίσῃ* 9. 512).

The verb chosen to designate Ate's intercourse with men is *ἕπεσθαι*, a verb of motion and attendance. Combined with the image of the strong and healthy feet of Ate, *ἕπεσθαι* seems to escalate to a level of pursuit that will have the mortal man as a target (note the force of ἵνα 9. 512). Zeus' consent is not explicitly mentioned in the text but is implied. The whole sequence of events has been presented as a general truth (stressed by the use of gnomic aorists *ὤνησαν καί τ' ἔκλυον* 9. 509) and as a picture of the general order of the world, in which the two counterbalancing powers (Ate and Litai) interchange. The entreaty of the Litai does not imply alliance

ing/ entreating entities and as entities being supplicated/ entreated by humans. This dynamic pattern of possessing both active and passive forces (of *λίσσεσθαι* in this case) is standard for the depiction of gods in Homer and in Greek thought in general. See also Fränkel 1975, 61 on this point who gives the pertinent example of Ares in the epics (Ares is both the action of the actor and he is also the suffering of the victim, Il. 13. 567; Ares is transferred from the weapon to the wound).

49. Their reaction recalls Thetis' supplication in *Iliad* 1. 497-502 (on which see Tsagalis 2007 with insightful comments on aspects of movement and transition), as well as the reaction of the Hesiodic Dike in the *Erga (*259-260).

with Ate; rather, Ate's involvement can open up a new circle of damage and healing.[50]

This potential new circle of pursuit, injury and disability is encapsulated in the image of Ate following (*ἕπεσθαι*) and disabling (*βλάπτειν*) the mortal man. The imagery of movement is indeed characteristic of traditional patterns of thought, according to which inimical powers *pursue* mortals: in the parable of the Jars in *Iliad* 24 'misery' pursues the mortal man (*ἑ κακὴ βούβρωστις ἐπὶ χθόνα δῖαν ἐλαύνει* 24. 532); in the *Odyssey* Poseidon persecutes and violently pushes away Odysseus (*ὦρσε δ' ἐπὶ μέγα κῦμα Ποσειδάων... ἤλασε δ' αὐτόν* 5. 367); in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* the daughter of Ate, wretched Peitho, drives men on (βιᾶται 385-86); in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* an inimical god 'ravages the town' (*ἐλαύνει πόλιν OT* 28), while Ara ('Curse') will drive Oedipus from Thebes in dreadful haste (*ἐλᾷ ποτ' ἐκ γῆς τῆσδε δεινόπους ἀρά*, *OT* 418); in Euripides the Erinyes persecute Orestes (*ἠλάστρουν θεαί* Eur. *IT* 934, 970) - and the list can grow longer.[51] In Homer this prospect and potential development (which corresponds to traditional assumptions of human-divine interaction) is not irreversible; from Phoenix' point of view it takes a re-location, a reversal of movement: 'do grant the honour of bending one's mind to the Maidens, so that this honour follows them (attends upon them as a retinue)' (9. 513-14). In other words, instead of Ate going after and persecuting the mortals, Phoenix proposes that the mortal agents go along with the Litai,

50. It is Hesiod who develops further and pushes this thought to its bleakest extremes: *ὅς δέ κε μαρτυρίῃσι ἑκὼν ἐπίορκον ὀμόσσας/ ψεύσεται, ἐν δὲ δίκην βλάψας νήκεστον ἀασθῇ, / τοῦ δέ τ' ἀμαυροτέρη γενεὴ μετόπισθε λέλειπται* ('*whoever deliberately lies in his witness and foreswears himself, and so harms Justice and sins beyond repair, that man's generation is left obscure thereafter*', *Erga* 282-84). From the Hesiodic point of view if a mortal harms Dike, then the harmful effect of Ate (*ἀασθῇ*) is 'incurable', 'beyond repair', without healing (νήκεστον). Homer, on the other hand, leaves room for remedy: Phoenix' insight allows for the recycling of divine damage/ punishment and divine healing.

51. Dike's movement is also notable: *ἕπεται κλαίουσα κακὸν φέρουσα* (Hesiod *Erga* 220); *ἦλθ' ἀποτεισομένη, εὗρε δὲ πάντως* (Solon 4W); Cf. also the Aeschylean Ate: A. *Ag.* 1124 *ταχεία δε ἄτα πέλει*; *Eum.* 377-380 the heavy feet of Erinyes is a *δύσφορος ἄτα*.

bringing them the appropriate honour which can attend upon and convoy (*ἕπεσθαι*) the venerable Litai.

Phoenix' rhetoric here continues the proxemic imagery (developed above)[52] and suggests a reversal of group formation and movement. The structure and syntax of the two consecutive lines seem to reflect this reversal: τῷ ἄτην ἕπεσθαι ~ κούρῃσιν ἕπεσθαι τιμήν.[53] For such a reversal, however, human agency proves to be decisive (as a factor with a capacity to change the course of events). Phoenix's effort seems to be to give a picture of the socio-cosmic order of events and thus to persuade Achilles to act as an agent of social and divine politics,[54] in order to mediate that a new group formation can take a new course of action under the aegis of the Litai, powers that both utter and hear prayers, that both bear and heal injuries.

This dynamic arena of cosmic-political alliances involves intense exchange and interchange: Achilles must provide τιμή ('honour', 'due regard', 'prerogative') for alliance with the benevolent and healing powers of the Litai which is no other than the bending (*ἐπιγνάμπτειν*) of one's mind: *πόρε καὶ σὺ Διὸς κούρῃσιν* (sc. the Litai*) ἕπεσθαι/ τιμήν, ἥ τ' ἄλλων περ ἐπιγνάμπτει νόον ἐσθλῶν* ('the honour that bends the mind even of the great ones' 9. 514). In the Iliadic context and more importantly on the level of the politics of Olympus the intimate link between λίσσεσθαι and ἐπιγνάμπτειν is strong and intricate: it is established by Zeus himself at the beginning of the second book of the *Iliad* and in the context of the *οὖλος ὄνειρος* (the destructive dream that he sends to Agamemnon), when he

52. Related imagery also in Agamemnon's parable in Il. 19. In Agamemnon's discourse references to Ate are not limited to a moral/ exculpatory function but seem to have also political tinges, as Agamemnon systematically presses the analogies between himself and Zeus. In epic and tragic poetry feet-related imagery has symbolic associations with power and domination, as it will be discussed below.

53. The choice of the verbal forms seems to echo the movement imagery related to the Litai. To confer honour, Achilles must set things in motion.

54. I agree with Yamagata 2005 that Achilles' agency is stressed here; but I see him as an agent in the context of socio-divine politics rather than as an agent of Ate.

announces that a new political order has prevailed among the gods: Hera managed to bend the minds of all gods through her entreaties (*ἐπέγναμψεν γὰρ ἅπαντας/ Ἥρη λισσομένη*, 2. 14-15) and now the gods are of one mind (*οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἀμφὶς Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες/ ἀθάνατοι φράζονται*, 'the immortals who live on Olympus are no longer divided in purpose' 2. 13) with dire consequences for the Trojans (*Τρώεσσι δὲ κήδε' ἐφῆπται* 'sorrows are in store for the Trojans' 2.15); thus, Agamemnon and the Achaeans should act accordingly and start war *πανσυδίηι* ('with all speed' 2. 17). Zeus' message is deceptive but its persuasiveness is based on the ideological premise that a bending or change of mind is possible through *lissesthai*.

Phoenix seems to explore the same ideological assumption and it is possible that he implies an association between the imagery of *ἐπιγνάμπτειν* ('bending, curving')[55] with the imagery defining the notion and nature of the Litai, as he outlined them earlier: the bent and twisted mind seems to correlate to the lame legs, the folded skin and the side-looking eyes of the Litai. This correspondence seems to clarify better the features of the Litai: their slow and uneven walking seems to correspond to a type of thought that is not impetuous or rash; their wrinkled forefront may express deep reflection, while their being παραβλῶπες hints at παραβλέπειν in the sense of overlooking, of turning 'a blind eye' to issues.[56] The honour of bending one's mind presupposes and necessitates qualities and behaviors indicated by all the above features. Under this light the graphic representation of the Litai with the unusual and ambivalent bodily traits constitutes a composite picture of a multifaceted dynamic phenomenon that involves both suppliant and supplicated in an interaction under the aegis of the divine.

55. It is worth mentioning here that γνάμπτω is the poetic form of *κάμπτω* ('bend', 'curve'), used in compound form by Homer.

56. *Παραβλέπειν* meaning to *overlook*: τί τἀλλότριον ... *κακὸν ὀξυδερκεῖς, τὸ δ' ἴδιον παραβλέπεις; Com.Adesp.359*. Eustathius (768) reminds us that *ὀφθαλμὼ παραβάλλεσθαι* (in the sense of *σεμνοπροσωπεῖν*) was the philosophical look associated with Socrates by Aristophanes (*Clouds* 362f.); this aspect may also tie with the reflective, spherical mind.

In the grip of the circumstances

Phoenix seems to suggest that this manifold process is under way in the context of the Achaeans' embassy. In his myth of the Litai he has sketched it in broad, theologizing terms, giving the generalized and typified outline of the procedure as part of a broader socio-cosmic order (of a recurrent nature). The basic aspects that came to the foreground were movement (in all its various ambivalent, painful or powerful forms) and words (also in various forms) in the context of *lissesthai*. Human history, however, with its particularities and exceptionalities may not conform fully to the general pattern; and Phoenix may be aware of that and may aspire to anticipate and prevent negative developments. Thus, in his final remarks (9. 522-23) and before moving to Meleager's exemplum (9. 524-600) he chooses to comment retrospectively upon these two basic issues (movement and words) with reference to the particular occasion and to the specific present circumstances. His comment takes the form of an appeal, of an open request to Achilles:[57] 'do not scorn the words or the feet' of the men sent to entreat you (*ἄνδρας λίσσεσθαι ἐπιπροέηκε ... τῶν μή σύ γε μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς / μηδὲ πόδας* 9. 520, 522-23).

The two nouns that Phoenix chooses to formulate his request (*μή μῦθον ... μηδὲ πόδας*) correspond to and express the full content of the entreating activity. Both seem to be carefully chosen. In the preparation of the embassy to Achilles Nestor had insisted that Achilles should be persuaded with 'kind words' (9. 287 *ἔπεσσί τε μειλιχίοισι*). The term was not used randomly. As Martin has shown, *epos* is an utterance focusing on message as perceived by the addressee and accompanying a physical act.[58] In the context of *lissesthai* (a procedure with an important physical part and focused on the addressee) *epos* would be the appropriate term. Phoenix, however, admits that they addressed Achilles with *muthos*, i.e., speech indicating au-

57. Which balances the opening request of the section of the Litai (*ἀλλ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, δάμασον θυμόν μέγαν* 9. 496-97).

58. Martin 1989, 12 et *passim*.

thority (with focus on the details contained therein). It is doubtful if an authoritative speech act can stand in harmony with the mode of *lissesthai*.

Similar but perhaps more intense issues seem to be raised by the second term that Phoenix uses i.e., the term *πόδας* which is associated with the coming of the embassy and their approach to Achilles. It is worth pointing out that in the structure of Phoenix' plea it is the term *πόδας* that receives the rhetorical emphasis (produced through enjambement and placement of the word at the beginning of l. 523, a distinct place highlighted by caesura and syntax end). Such an emphatic utterance seems to multiply the semantic associations of the term: *Πόδας* seems to pick up and recapitulate the imagery of movement and spatial action that has been deployed throughout the exposition of the second exemplum. It recalls the feet of the strong Ate (*ἀρτίπους*), her rash passage, her violent pursuit and her harming; and it implies by contrast the lame members of the Litai, their limping, their slow and heedful walking. In Phoenix' discourse the foot was associated with strength and harming, while the impaired group of the Litai introduced the aspect of *aidos*, the potential of healing and reparation. *Πούς* (foot) generally signifies the capability of moving and normally the capability of moving energetically, if not violently. The dative ποσί ('with feet' literally) is often added to verbs of motion as a form of emphasis,[59] while in tragic poetry the term recurs in expressions connoting the potential for domination as well as in imagery related to power.[60] Against this background of associations, the choice of the term *πόδας* (to signify the coming

59. According to *LSJ*[9] s.v. *πούς* the dat. *ποσί, ποσσί, πόδεσσι*) is added to many verbs denoting motion (π. *βήσετο, παρέδραμον*, Il.8.389, 23.636; π. *θέειν, πηδᾶν, σκαίρειν, πλίσσεσθαι*, ib. 622, 21.269, 18.572, Od. 6.318; "*ὀρχεῖσθαι*" Hes. Th. 3; "*ἔρχεσθαι*" Od. 6. 39; "*νέρθε δὲ ποσσὶν ἴϊε μακρὰ βιβάς*" Il. 7. 212); also emphatically with verbs denoting *to trample* or *tread upon* e.g. *"πόσσι καταστείβοισι"* Sapph. *94*; "*ἐπεμβῆναι ποδί*" S. El. 456; *πόδα τιθέναι* to journey, Ar.Th.1100: metaph., *νόστιμον ναῦς ἐκίνησεν πόδα* started on its homeward way, E. Hec. 940.

60. Levine 2015; cf. also Catenaccio 2012, 102-3 on Erinyes and foot images. (On Homeric Ate and the Aeschylean Erinyes cf. Levine 2015, 274-75 where the Litai are rather confusingly presented). The Eastern material is even richer in associations of the feet with power or domination: see Hall's comment on A. *Persians* 161 and 515 (Hall 1996). (Differ-

of the embassy) acquires added significance: it implies capability (and not disability) of movement and ties well with the imagery of the smooth and well-balanced journeying of the embassy (expressed through the duals in 9. 182, 192). It hints at an imposing presence (in contrast to the ambivalent appearance of the divine Litai). Combined and paratactically structured with μῦθον (*μή μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς / μηδὲ πόδας* 9. 522-23), the term seems to articulate a mode of communication and approach in standard, authoritative terms. Given, however, the fact that Achilles is the *πόδας ὠκύς* hero, the 'feet' (*πόδας)* of the embassy (that Phoenix fears it may provoke Achilles' contempt) may even imply latent juxtaposition, if not antagonism.

The power of the Litai proved to be inextricably linked to their deformities, to their disabilities that allowed them to come late and heal the injuries caused by Ate, eliciting aidos and securing the honour of bending strong minds through their deformed and infirm body. In the context of the interaction activated through *lissesthai* the impairment of the Litai proves to be an essential quality for a beneficial, curing outcome and not a graphic detail. Phoenix' mythical discourse makes apparent the terms of this symbolic interaction. On the other hand, the firm feet of the Achaeans as well as their *muthoi* seem to diverge from the frame of the action involving the Litai, and Phoenix's seems to discern these inconsistencies vis-à-vis the paradoxical dynamics of *lissesthai*. For this reason, he concludes his Litai exemplum with a plea to Achilles of a deterring, preventive nature: 'do not scorn the speeches or the coming of the embassy' - an open advice to Achilles to bypass any inconsistencies (or ironies) of the situation and perhaps profit from a broader overview of cosmic politics.[61]

In a similar manner, the mythological exemplum of the past that Phoenix narrates immediately after the Litai parable concludes in an analogous cautionary, deterring tone: 'do not have the mind that Meleager had, do

ent symbolic qualities could be attached to tyrants and their regimes often associated with deformity: Vernant 1988.)

61. I would not exclude that *muthos* has metapoetical resonances here; see also Bierl in this volume. His discussion is relevant on exempla discourses in Homer generally.

not let a god turn you in that path' (*ἀλλὰ σὺ μή μοι ταῦτα νόει φρεσί, μὴ δέ σε δαίμων ἐνταῦθα τρέψειε* 9. 600). The tale of the Aetolian hero's reversal is a case study of ineffective *lissesthai*. Phoenix recounts the repeated attempts at entreating and persuading Meleager through gifts (attempts made by his fellow citizens and family members 9. 574, 581, 585).[62] Things changed when *lissesthai* was undertaken by his wife Kleopatra who performed λίσσεσθαι along with *ὀδύρεσθαι* (9. 591 *λίσσετ' ὀδυρομένη* 'she entreated him with tears') in view of the enemies' demolishing and disastrous attacks (9. 588-89). *ὀδύρεσθαι* ('crying, lamenting') is an expression of embodied pain, a signal of helplessness that can stir pity[63] and can activate reflexes of heroic intervention in face of imminent disaster. At this stage Meleager denounced his anger and took to action, without securing gifts however. 'Meleager's delay in changing his mind and his 'path' is a counterexample', Phoenix seems to conclude (9. 600-602), making use of spatial imagery for the last time in his speech. Although Phoenix prefaced his exposition of Meleager's exemplum with a general statement that heroes of the past were *δωρητοί τε παράρρητοί τ' ἐπέεσσι* ('they could be won by gifts and by words' persuasion' 9. 524-26),[64] he continued with a heroic incident of the past (*μέμνημαι τόδε ἔργον*, 'I myself remember this deed' 9. 527) that diverged from the pattern and ended in a way unprofitable for the hero. Likewise in the tale of the Litai, Phoenix exposes the functional role of lameness and vulnerability (in the broader order of *lissesthai*) but concludes with a plea for tolerance (and thus with indirect acknowledgment) of unimpaired movement at present. Phoenix seems to be aware that Achilles is confronted by an assuredly moving (and speaking) group that complicates interaction, undermines the potential effect of the overall

62. Kakridis famously argued about Homeric use of an 'ascending scale of affection' in supplication (Kakridis 1949, 19-53, 159-164).

63. The connection is so strong that *oiktos* (the term for pity) is sometimes used instead of wailing or lamenting in the texts: see Konstan 2001, 53-55.

64. Il. 9. 524-26 *οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων, ὅτε κέν τιν' ἐπιζάφελος χόλος ἵκοι: δωρητοί τε πέλοντο παράρρητοί τ' ἐπέεσσι.*

entreating activity and leaves him indecisive.[65] Nonetheless, by offering an insight into the power of the Litai in the world, Phoenix seems to encourage Achilles to see in advance 'the paths' gradually or potentially opened-up and to act as a political agent, empowered with a foresight to anticipate and even prevent future impairments and losses.[66]

Achilles, however, is implicated in the dynamics of the present moment, which is loaded with discrepancies. The *lissesthai* of the Achaeans lacks the overt, embodied markers of wounding and infirmity and thus it does not signal the need for Achilles' healing intervention. In parallel, the lack of these physical tokens implies on the one hand, that there are no stimuli to stir any emotion (such as pity) that could assuage (or replace) anger and on the other that there are no signals of change that would call for the corresponding 'bending' of mind on the part of the hero. In terms of symbolic interaction, the approach of the Achaeans (and their words) did not convey clear signals. Achilles remains indecisive as to his role, and the overall effect of the communication is limited. His indecisiveness is made more apparent by the fact that he alters his decision and plans for the following day at each of his responses.[67] At the end (and after Ajax' speech) he decides to stay and wait for Hector to come close to his ships (9. 654-55).

65. I do not want to suggest that Achilles expected a confession from Agamemnon in order to forgive and reconcile with him; KONSTAN (2010: 60-63) is clear and persuasive on this point.

66. Impairments and losses that would inescapably lead to his death. Phoenix may insinuate that the wounding in store for the Achaeans (due to Hector's attack) further ascertains Achilles' involvement and fate of death (disclosed by the hero in Il. 9. 410-15); he glosses over it, as it is a delicate matter. On Phoenix' speech (especially Meleager's tale) as foreshadowing Achilles' death see SCHADEWALDT 1938, 139-43.

67. He threatens to leave the following morning: *Il.* 9. 360-61; he may not leave the following morning: *Il.* 9. 618-19; he will stay and wait for Hector: *Il.* 9. 654-55.

Consequences

The great battle that starts the following day (*Il.* 11. 70ff.) does not leave Achilles indifferent or inert.[68] From the vantage point of the stern of his ship he keeps watching the fierce battle (11. 600-601). Witnessing the injuries inflicted upon the Achaeans by the Trojans, he starts realizing the increasing pressure for his 'healing' intervention and he expects (and gladly envisions perhaps) that the Achaeans will supplicate him 'on their knees' this time (11. 609-610).[69] It is probably not insignificant that he sends Patroclus to Nestor to learn news about the Achaeans when he sees that Machaon the healer is wounded (11. 598-99). In this association it might not be irrelevant that Patroclus himself offers his healing services to Eurypylus upon his return to Achilles' hut and before going to fight (11. 809-845).[70]

Patroclus eventually mediates for Achilles' 'healing' intervention on behalf of the Achaeans: his tragic end compels the hero to return to battle (18. 114-126); he does so, however, after he denounces his *menis* publicly (according to Thetis' suggestion: 19. 34-35). When the Achaeans resume to reconcile two days after the Embassy (19. 45ff.), Odysseus and Diomedes are wounded and approach limping, leaning on their spears (*τὼ δὲ δύω σκάζοντε βάτην Ἄρεος θεράποντε/ Τυδεΐδης τε μενεπτόλεμος καὶ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς/ ἔγχει ἐρειδομένω: ἔτι γὰρ ἔχον ἕλκεα λυγρά,* 'two came limping

68. And this may be a consequence of the embassy the previous night, since Achilles had shown no such interest before the embassy (in bb. 2-8).

69. These two verses have been taken to imply ignorance of the entreaties in b. 9 or contradiction (PAGE 1959, 305-306). My reading suggests that the approach of the embassy lacked a clear supplicating quality (corresponding to Phoenix's portrait of the Litai). From this perspective the lines sound as an implicit comment on the embassy and as an anticipation of the continuation of *lissesthai* (in line with the repeated entreating motif in Meleager's tale). Cf. also Alden's discussion of the difference between supplication and entreaty that demonstrates how Achilles' complaint at 609-10 does not mean that he ignores the Embassy as the Analysts have claimed (ALDEN 2000, 181ff.).

70. The theme of healing has been introduced through the myth of the Litai in conjunction with wounding and supplication. This connection subtly persists.

along, two of Ares' men-at-arms, the staunch son of Tydeus and godlike Odysseus, leaning on their spears as their wounds still pained them' 19. 47-49);[71] Agamemnon himself appears last, moving slowly because of his wounds (19. 51-52), unable to stand upright even when speaking (19. 77).[72] Achilles, on the other hand, stands up in their midst (*τοῖσι δ' ἀνιστάμενος μετέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς,* 'swift-footed Achilles stood up and spoke to them' 19. 55), ready to undertake the task prescribed by Thetis (*οὐ κακόν ἐστι/ τειρομένοις ἑτάροισιν ἀμυνέμεν αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον*, 'it is a good thing to ward utter destruction from your comrades who are hard beset' 18. 128-29). His allegiance to the injured and fatigued Achaeans and his capacity to fight on their behalf are openly acknowledged and reciprocated: Agamemnon and the Achaeans insist that the promised gifts be brought and given to him publicly (19. 140, 241-249). Conciliation is achieved and reciprocity restored between the two parties, but both seem to be badly 'injured'.[73] Achilles, however, is still 'on his feet', while the others seem to be impaired (even temporarily). His heroic capacity seems to be activated when the others are (by divine will) incapacitated. The spatial dynamics involved in the process of supplication and reconciliation that Phoenix prefigured in his theologizing discourse in *Iliad* 9, retain their symbolic potential in the context of the socio-political rearrangement of the Achaean community in *Iliad* 19.

71. The use of the dual is characteristic: *τώ δὲ δύω σκάζοντε βάτην* (19.47) makes a sharp contrast to *τὼ δὲ βάτην* in Il. 9. 182 & 192 (the famous duals of the Embassy scene).

72. As Edwards 1993 ad 47-53 notes, 'limping' appears in 19. 47, it is explained in 19. 49 and then the motif is repeated with more elaboration in the case of Agamemnon 19. 51-52: a Homeric technique which underlines matters of importance. On Agamemnon's position during his speech see Edwards 1993 ad 76-84. Coray 2009 ad 77 rightly associates Agamemnon's sitting position with his injuries (and not with feelings of contempt towards Achilles); cf. also Coray 2009 ad 79-80 & 81-82. Agamemnon takes the whole Achaean assembly as his audience (not Achilles or a small circle of leaders).

73. The Achaean leaders appeared limping, wounded and physically impaired. Achilles stood alone and Patroclus κείτετο νεκρός (in the Embassy scene Patroclus was constantly present).

Epilogue

In retrospect, Phoenix' exemplum of the Litai seems to capture the potential inherent in the process of *lissesthai* involving human and non-human agents. The operation of the power of the Litai in the cosmos seems to presuppose reciprocal acknowledgment of injury and vulnerability through overt markers in a context of symbolic interaction. In a culture in which communication is so much based on symbolic performance overt markers and signals of potential shifting of roles and action (through possible divine alliances) are necessary to make negotiation possible. In Phoenix' insightful presentation the potential of the Litai is brought forward through the imagery of movement that proves to be also suggestive of the limitations placed by the human agents with their competing agendas. At the same time, this imagery helps also throw some light to the activation of this potential when human agendas have been overturned.

APPENDIX
Limping and supplication

The Homeric *Litai* seem to be exceptional entities that combine divine power with lameness and other physical deformities. Such a conception may seem an *ad hoc* poetic invention (placed in the mouth of one of the characters of the epics). Nonetheless, χωλότης and deformity caused or born by a divine agent and associated with the context of supplication or with entreaties for reconciliation may not be a phenomenon alien to ancient mentalities and traditions. The Hebrew Genesis contains the story of the two antagonistic brothers Jacob and Esau, who were finally reconciled after Jacob wrestled with a divine agent that wounded him and he thus acquired a limp.[74] According to the biblical narrative (Gen. 27-33) Jacob stole his brother's birthright and even managed to usurp his blessing. Upon hearing this, Esau is enraged and vows to kill Jacob who flees for his life to Haran, where he remains for many years. After acquiring a family and many possessions, Jacob is instructed by God to return to his fatherland. He sets on his way with all his family, servants and possessions and travels for days, preparing his meeting with his brother with due caution. Jacob is afraid for his life, expecting an attack by Esau, and sends ahead gifts to pacify his old rival. After crossing the river Jabbok and helping everyone else move ahead, he is left alone. At night he is met by a divine opponent who begins a fight that lasts for the whole night. The divine agent wants to go before the sun rises, and so he tries to disable Jacob, by wounding him on the hip. Jacob agrees to let his attacker go, once he blesses him. At this point, Jacob's attacker declares: 'Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with human beings, and have prevailed' (Gen. 32:28). Thus, in the wrestling scene Jacob is first wounded and then blessed directly by a divine agent who gives him his name, his title as the father of Israel. Directly after the fight, Jacob moves along *limping* to meet his brother; he bows down many times until he reaches him, offers his gifts to Esau in person and is finally

74. *Genesis* 32. 22–32: The precondition for the all-conquering Jacob to be reconciled with God and with his brother Esau is that he acquires a limp. He acquires consciousness of his own vulnerability.

reconciled to him.[75] After this scene the adventures of Jacob/ Israel come to a close.

The relevant passages from the Greek text of the Septuagint run as follows:

32. *Καὶ ᾽Ιακὼβ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὴν ὁδὸν ἑαυτοῦ. ... ᾽Απέστειλε δὲ ᾽Ιακὼβ ἀγγέλους ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ πρὸς ῾Ησαῦ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ εἰς γῆν Σηείρ, εἰς χώραν ᾽Εδώμ...* 6 *καὶ ἀνέστρεψαν οἱ ἄγγελοι πρὸς ᾽Ιακὼβ λέγοντες· ἤλθομεν πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου ῾Ησαῦ, καὶ ἰδοὺ αὐτὸς ἔρχεται εἰς συνάντησίν σοι καὶ τετρακόσιοι ἄνδρες μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ.* 7 *ἐφοβήθη δὲ ᾽Ιακὼβ σφόδρα, καὶ ἠπορεῖτο .:.* 13 *καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐκεῖ τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην. καὶ ἔλαβεν ὧν ἔφερε δῶρα καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν ῾Ησαῦ τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ ... εἶπε γάρ· ἐξιλάσομαι τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς δώροις τοῖς προπορευομένοις αὐτοῦ, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ὄψομαι τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ· ἴσως γὰρ προσδέξεται τὸ πρόσωπόν μου.* 21 *καὶ προεπορεύετο τὰ δῶρα κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκοιμήθη τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ.* 22 *᾽Αναστὰς δὲ τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην ἔλαβε τὰς δύο γυναῖκας καὶ τὰς δύο παιδίσκας καὶ τὰ ἕνδεκα παιδία αὐτοῦ καὶ διέβη τὴν διάβασιν τοῦ ᾽Ιαβώκ·* 23 *καὶ ἔλαβεν αὐτοὺς καὶ διέβη τὸν χειμάρρουν καὶ διεβίβασε πάντα τὰ αὐτοῦ.* 24 *ὑπελείφθη δὲ ᾽Ιακὼβ μόνος, καὶ ἐπάλαιεν ἄνθρωπος μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἕως πρωΐ.* 25 *εἶδε δέ, ὅτι οὐ δύναται πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ ἥψατο τοῦ πλάτους τοῦ μηροῦ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐνάρκησε τὸ πλάτος τοῦ μηροῦ ᾽Ιακὼβ ἐν τῷ παλαίειν αὐτὸν μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ.* 26 *καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀπόστειλόν με· ἀνέβη γὰρ ὁ ὄρθρος. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· οὐ μή σε ἀποστείλω, ἐὰν μή με εὐλογήσῃς.* 27 *εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ· τί τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐστίν, ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ᾽Ιακώβ.* 28 *καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· οὐ κληθήσεται ἔτι τὸ ὄνομά σου ᾽Ιακώβ, ἀλλ᾽ ᾽Ισραὴλ ἔσται τὸ ὄνομά σου, ὅτι ἐνίσχυσας μετὰ Θεοῦ, καὶ μετ᾽ ἀνθρώπων δυνατὸς ἔσῃ.* 29 *ἠρώτησε δὲ ᾽Ιακὼβ καὶ εἶπεν· ἀνάγγειλόν μοι τὸ ὄνομά σου. καὶ εἶπεν· ἱνατί τοῦτο ἐρωτᾶς σὺ τὸ ὄνομά μου; καὶ εὐλόγησεν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ.* 30 *καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ᾽Ιακὼβ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου, Εἶδος Θεοῦ· εἶδον γὰρ Θεὸν πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, καὶ ἐσώθη μου ἡ ψυχή.* 31 *ἀνέτειλε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ ἥλιος, ἡνίκα παρῆλθε τὸ εἶδος τοῦ Θεοῦ·* ***αὐτὸς δέ ἐπέσκαζε τῷ μηρῷ αὐτοῦ·*** 32 *ἕνεκεν τούτου οὐ μὴ φάγωσιν υἱοὶ ᾽Ισραὴλ τὸ νεῦρον, ὃ ἐνάρκησεν, ὅ ἐστιν ἐπὶ τοῦ πλάτους τοῦ μηροῦ, ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης.*

75. On reconciliation Konstan 2010 (107) and Morgan 2011 (who have not noticed, however, the importance of limping).

33. *Ἀναβλέψας δὲ ᾽Ιακὼβ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ εἶδε καὶ ἰδοὺ ῾Ησαῦ ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ἐρχόμενος καὶ τετρακόσιοι ἄνδρες μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ. καὶ διεῖλεν ᾽Ιακὼβ τὰ παιδία ἐπὶ Λείαν καὶ ἐπί Ραχὴλ καὶ τὰς δύος παιδίσκας.* 2 *καὶ ἔθετο τὰς δύο παιδίσκας καὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς αὐτῶν ἐν πρώτοις καὶ Λείαν καὶ τὰ παιδία αὐτῆς ὀπίσω καὶ Ραχὴλ καὶ ᾽Ιωσὴφ ἐσχάτους.* 3 *αὐτὸς δὲ προῆλθεν ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησεν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἑπτάκις ἕως τοῦ ἐγγίσαι τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ.* 4 *καὶ προσέδραμεν ῾Ησαῦ εἰς συνάντησιν αὐτῷ καὶ περιλαβὼν αὐτὸν προσέπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ κατεφίλησεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἔκλαυσαν ἀμφότεροι.*[76]

32. *Jacob also went on his way … Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, "We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." And Jacob was in great fear … "I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead; later, when I see him, perhaps he will receive me." So Jacob's gifts went on ahead of him, but he himself spent the night in the camp. That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the river Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place 'Form of God'/ Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. (Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat*

76. For a remarkable pictorial representation of the incident see the miniature (Wiener Genesis Tafel XXIII) in the beautifully-illuminated *Vienna Genesis Manuscript* (cod. theol. gr. 31 f. 12v).

the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.)

33. *Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants… He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother. But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they both wept.*

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THE FATE OF THE PHEACIANS AND THE ISSUE OF DIVINE JUSTICE

This contribution[1] starts by addressing an old issue: what happens to the Phaeacians after they have taken Odysseus back to Ithaca in book 13 of the *Odyssey*: does Poseidon cover their city with a mountain or not? Or does the poet leave it open on purpose? Or, finally, should we conclude that we cannot decide?

I have discussed this issue in detail in a recent article (Van der Mije 2020), which arrived at the conclusion that a decision can be reached on the basis of the relevant episode in *Odyssey* 13 alone, without drawing in considerations from the wider *Odyssean* context. What an analysis of the episode itself strongly suggests, I argued, is that Zeus advises against punishing the Phaeacians, and that Poseidon follows his advice.

I will first briefly recapitulate the passage and discuss some of the major considerations from my earlier paper, leaving out many points of detail as well as the refutation of arguments to the contrary, but I will also add some new material to the discussion. I will then zoom out and address the next questions: if Zeus does advise against the mountain, *why* does he do so – does this behaviour fit a pattern? At the end, I briefly consider the function of this passage within the narrative of the *Odyssey*.

Is the Phaeacian city covered with a mountain? The evidence from *Odyssey* 13.125-187

The beginning of book 13 describes Odysseus' final day on Scheria. It is taken up with sacrifices, banquets, and cordial leave-takings. When Odysseus

1. I wish to thank Irene J.F. de Jong and Tineke Jong for several valuable suggestions and Ela Harrison for correcting my English.

finally boards the magic ship which is going to take him to Ithaca, it is well into the night. Sailing faster than a falcon flies (13.86f.), the ship reaches the island around dawn. The crew lay Odysseus, who has slept through the whole journey, on the beach (he does not wake up even now), along with the many gifts he has received from the Phaeacians, and sail back to Scheria.

On its way back, the ship is spotted by Poseidon. He is furious about the escort and about the presents the Phaeacians have given Odysseus and complains to Zeus (13.128-158). Zeus replies that, if any mortal has treated him with contempt, he can punish him any way he wishes. Poseidon then says he wishes to smash the returning ship on the open sea and cover the city of the Phaeacians with a big mountain,[2] but he would like Zeus' opinion on the matter. Zeus replies that, with regard to the returning ship, Poseidon might want to wait until it is inside the harbour and then turn it into stone before everybody's eyes. And with regard to the mountain … but here (13.158), we have a textual problem. According to the manuscripts, Zeus repeats Poseidon's line "cover the city with a big mountain," but a scholion reports that Aristophanes of Byzantium read μηδέ instead of *μέγα δέ:* "*not* cover the city with a mountain."

After this final line from Zeus, Poseidon leaves for Scheria, waits for the ship to arrive, petrifies it, and departs. Witnessing the petrification, King Alcinous remembers something his father Nausithous had told him more than once: that Nausithous' own father, none other than Poseidon himself,

2. It is sometimes assumed that *μέγα δέ σφιν ὄρος πόλει ἀμφικαλύψαι* does not mean "cover the city" but "surround the city (i.e. the peninsula it is situated on) with a mountain." In Van der Mije 2021, 28, I indicate that I tend to the "cover" interpretation for various reasons. Here is another: the myth about Poseidon crushing the giant Polybotes beneath a piece of the island of Cos, which he had first severed from the island with his trident (cf. his chipping off the piece of rock on which Ajax was sitting, 4.506-508), connects throwing (pieces of) islands with Poseidon, and even if our written sources for this myth do not use the word ἀμφικαλύπτειν (Apollod. 1.6.2 *ἐπέρριψεν αὐτῷ*, Strb. 10.5.16 *ἐπ' αὐτὸν βάλοι*), they do describe Polybotes as lying beneath it, i.e. he is effectively "covered all around" by it, not merely hit in the ways Iliadic warriors are felled with a *χερμάδιον*. There are vase paintings of Poseidon going after Polybotes with a huge rock predating our written sources; see F. Vian in *LIMC* s.v. Polybotes (VII.1, 426f.).

had expressed his resentment at the Phaeacians' use of their magic ships to escort non-Phaeacians home, and that if they continued this practice, he would one day smash one of the escorting ships on its journey home and cover the city of the Phaeacians with a big mountain – the very words we have heard Poseidon say to Zeus just now. Alcinous fears that Poseidon may now cover the city with a mountain, and in an attempt to avert this, he proclaims an end to escorts and orders sacrifices to Poseidon. And while the Phaeacians are praying and sacrificing, the narrative switches back to Odysseus, who wakes up on Ithaca.

So far the recapitulation. Now follow my major considerations for assuming that Zeus advised Poseidon not to cover the city with a mountain.

A first indication of what Zeus must have advised is the way the conversation between Zeus and Poseidon unfolds.

When he first addresses Zeus, the matter seems clear cut to Poseidon: if I allow the Phaeacians to treat me disrespectfully (as they do in giving this royal treatment to Odysseus), I will lose the respect of the other gods (13.128-138).

Zeus replies (13.140-145): "How can you say something like that? You are so venerable and so powerful that it would be hard for any god to treat you disrespectfully. And should any human being ever fail to pay you homage, giving in to his own strength, you will always be free to punish him. You can do what you want and follow your heart."

What is Poseidon to make of this reply? On the one hand, he must have enjoyed the confirmation of his status, but on the other hand, Zeus seems to suggest that one so powerful and unchallengeable need not be so touchy and that he does not have to punish the Phaeacians to retain the respect of his fellow gods. Also: "someone giving in to his own strength" – does that apply to the Phaeacians? Not really. The punishment he has in mind may seem disproportionate to their misconduct. But then again, Zeus had said "do what you want" – so Poseidon decides simply to tell Zeus what he had in mind and see what he says (13.147-152):

"I would like to do just that, but I do not want to incur your displeasure. This is what I want to do: smash the ship, *so that the Phaeacians finally stop*

providing escorts, and cover the city with a big mountain." Note that Poseidon's aim has shifted; he no longer wants to punish the Phaeacians for escorting Odysseus – he has obviously taken Zeus' hints to heart – but to stop them escorting people in the future.

This shift of aim allows Zeus to suggest a course of action which will achieve Poseidon's new aim while preventing people from coming to harm: if Poseidon does not sink the ship out in the open sea, without witnesses, but instead petrifies it for all to see, this divine sign will be enough to make the Phaeacians stop escorting people. A mountain over the city will then not be necessary.

And his calculation works: Alcinous correctly interprets the petrification of the ship as a sign of Poseidon's displeasure and announces that no further escorts will happen ever again.

In short, I submit that the whole conversation between the gods leads up to Zeus saying "leave out the mountain part."

My second consideration is that the single fact of Zeus suggesting the petrification of the ship for all to see is a strong indicator of what must be read in 13.158, because if the petrification were followed by the mountain enveloping the city, why have the petrification in the first place? The Phaeacians, after all, would be in no doubt about the meaning of the mountain (assuming that they would live to interpret it), since it would completely match Poseidon's threat to Nausithous – more so than the petrified ship, which is a modification of the wording of the prophecy and is nevertheless interpreted correctly by Alcinous.

In other words, Zeus' reason for suggesting that he petrify the ship instead of smashing it out in the open sea must be to warn the Phaeacians by means of a divine sign that Poseidon's anger is upon them, and a warning implies that the worst, the mountain coming down, can, if taken to heart, still be averted. And Alcinous' reaction shows that he understands the warning and takes it to heart.[3]

3. Bierl 2020 argues for a metapoetic function of the petrification: for him, it symbolizes

Thirdly, the fact that Poseidon is said to "be gone" νόσφι βεβήκει, directly after he has petrified the ship, suggests that his mission has been accomplished.[4] And this in turn implies that Zeus *had* advised against the mountain, because Poseidon has emphatically asked Zeus for his advice (147f.), and has followed it with regard to the returning ship, so we may be confident that he will do so too with regard to the mountain. Had that advice been to cover the city with a mountain, this would have matched Poseidon's own plan, and he would certainly have executed it. The absence of any mention of this execution would in that case be very hard to explain.

A popular notion in recent studies and commentaries is that because we are not told explicitly whether Poseidon wielded his mountain or not, Homer left it open on purpose – an "open end". But this is to confuse the uncertainty in the transmission of the text with an ambiguous text.[5] In 13.158, Zeus must have said either yes (*μέγα δέ*) or no (*μηδέ*) to the mountain, and Poseidon must be assumed to have followed Zeus' advice, which means that in either case, there can be no doubt as to what ensued, and an "open end" is ruled out.

Finally, it has been suggested that both readings are acceptable and that the performance situation dictated which one the individual singer chose to use.[6] This option is favoured by adherents of a "multitext Homer." But

the fixation of the text of the *Odyssey*. Interesting as this suggestion is (and I very much agree with the idea of the *Odyssey* as a 'fixed' text, including line 158, the reading of which is sometimes taken as fluid and adapted to the performance situation, see n. 366), I would argue that if at all possible, an explanation on a poetic/narrative rather than on a metapoetic level should always be sought. Metapoetic, anthropological, etc. explanations may offer an extra layer of understanding, but they cannot oust the results of exegesis.

4. He is gone not just from the ship, but from the scene at Scheria, and from the rest of the *Odyssey*.

5. De Jong's (2000, 319-321) otherwise admirable discussion of 13.125-187 seems to confuse the two: "This open end allows the narratees either (i) when they read μὴ in 158, to assume that the prayer will be heard […], or (ii) when they read μέγα, to assume that the prayer will not be heard." This seems to suggest that the narrator offered the two readings as options to the narratees.

6. Nagy 2002 considers μηδέ to have a "legitimate" textual basis alongside μέγα δέ, meaning that it fits into the formulaic system of Homeric epic; he sees μέγα δέ as belonging

even if one is cautious in allowing only one original or 'right' reading, it is still legitimate to ask which of two or more alternative readings suits the context better. In this case, μηδέ is the reading lines 125-158 have been leading up to – and in my opinion, it fits the wider context better too. This is the subject of the next section.

Zeus' Policy of Justice and the Case of Odysseus

If an examination of 13.125-187 taken in isolation suggests that Zeus wants to avoid punishment for the Phaeacians, the next question is: why would he want this? Does the rest of the *Odyssey* give any clues?

There are many examples of gods helping or pursuing humans for 'personal reasons': Athena likes and helps Odysseus because he is like her, as she explains to him in 13.292-310. Poseidon hates and pursues Odysseus, because he hurt his son and mocked him (9.523-525). He loves the Phaeacians, his offspring, and gives them privileges like their magic ships and perpetual crops; but when they abuse their gifts by extending them to strangers, he is annoyed, and when the beneficiary is Odysseus, his anger is hot; and now, the fact that they are his own offspring turns against them (13.130).

Zeus, on the other hand, has no special ties to the Phaeacians. Nor with Odysseus; his decision to help him get safely home is motivated, it would seem, by his desire to see impartial justice prevail.[7]

to the "Panhellenic" phase of the text, whereas μηδέ would be connected with a performance before an audience on Corcyra (Corfu), whose inhabitants saw themselves as descendants of the Phaeacians (similarly Marks 2008, 56-61). This would appear to make μέγα δέ the "default" reading and *μηδέ* a special-purpose variant, but Nagy accords them equal validity and is himself neutral as to which reading fits the narrative context better. I have argued in my 2020 paper that *μηδέ* fits the direct narrative context (13.125-187) much better, and I am arguing here that it also fits the general picture of Zeus' behaviour in the *Odyssey* better.

7. Openness to the possibility that Zeus may care about righteousness in humans is sometimes dismissed as being motivated by a desire to see a modern concept of divine justice at work in the Homeric poems (most recently by Bierl 2020, 349). I can only say for

At the very start of the *Odyssey*, we hear Zeus complaining about the mortals who blame the gods for all their misfortunes. He protests that it is because of the disastrous choices people make[8] that they suffer ὑπὲρ μόρον, in excess of their share; this is not the gods' fault – indeed we try to avoid it, as we did in the case of Aegisthus; but he would not listen and has himself to blame for his fate (1.32-43). This prompts Athena to say: But what about Odysseus? Is he not suffering in excess of his share, and is he not a decent man? (1.45-63). Zeus accepts her point. But (he says) Poseidon is pursuing Odysseus because he blinded his son, the Cyclops. But let us now see to it that Odysseus gets home (64-79).

Is Zeus implying that Poseidon acted against his (Zeus') will and that he (Zeus) chose not to confront his brother, or is he implying that Poseidon had some claim to pursue Odysseus, but not indefinitely?[9] Lines 16-18, which place this Olympian scene in the year of Odysseus' destined homecoming, seem to support this. But the next Olympian scene makes clear that he thinks Odysseus has suffered too much.

In this scene, at the beginning of book 5,[10] Athena repeats her plea to Zeus for the return of Odysseus, again in general terms that would appeal to him: "Let no king be just and gentle anymore, […] but let him be harsh and unjust, as none of his people remembers Odysseus, who was kind as a

myself that I am not motivated by such a desire; I merely think that this is what the texts suggest.

8. *σφῇσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν* 1.34, cf. 1.7.

9. In 13.131-133, Poseidon reminds Zeus of the fact that he had agreed to let him harass Odysseus and keep him away from home – but not kill him. In Van der Mije 2022, I have argued that we must imagine a discussion between Poseidon and Zeus about the fate of Odysseus to have taken place after Polyphemus' prayer for revenge (5.528-535), the shape of which is suggested to the narratee by the discussion in book 13 about the fate of the Phaeacians. The reason why we are not given this earlier scene is that it falls within the chronological frame of Odysseus' report of his travels, in which Olympian scenes cannot be presented.

10. This is clearly not the same Olympian scene as in book 1, as Athena reports events that have occurred in between, e.g. Telemachus' journey; see De Jong 2001 ad 5.1-42 and next note.

father to them!"[11] But Zeus has not forgotten him.[12] During the time that Athena was looking after Telemachus, he has been devising a way to get Odysseus home and compensate him for his excessive sufferings: he will reach the island of the Phaeacians, who will "honour him like a god and escort him to his home country, giving him bronze and lots of gold and many textiles, more than he would have brought with him from Troy if he had not met with any misfortune" (5.36-40).

The last two lines, about the gifts, are repeated almost *verbatim* by Poseidon in his complaint to Zeus in book 13 (136f.), although he was not present when they were first spoken – he was still with the Aethiopians. What does this repetition signify? That Poseidon had gotten wind of Zeus' strategy and is now throwing it in his face? Not likely – we have no indication that he had received this information, and his tone to Zeus is not at all accusatory. Nor should one see it as merely convenient for the oral poet; that would not do justice to the composer of the *Odyssey*. I would explain the repetition as signifying to the primary narratee (or if you like, to the poem's audience)[13] that Zeus' plan has been achieved.

In any case, Zeus' plan to compensate Odysseus implies that he thinks Poseidon's punishment of Odysseus is excessive and unjust, as Athena had suggested. He obviously stands by his view that mortals should not suffer from the gods ὑπὲρ μόρον and feels responsible when confronted with evidence that they do.

11. At the gathering of the Ithacans in book 2, Mentor (2.229-241) used the very same words to reproach the Ithacans (230-234 = 5.8-12), which (1) suggests Athena's presence at the meeting, and (2) fits in with the fact that Athena only a little later (2.399-401) assumes Mentor's shape to assist Telemachus on his journey, until she departs in a way that reveals her true identity (3.371-384). That "none" remembers Odysseus is rhetorical exaggeration; Aegyptius (2.25-34) and Halitherses (2.161-176) recalled him.

12. True to his word in the first conversation: "How could I forget divine Odysseus?" (1.165).

13. This is not to deny that repetition has its roots in oral composition; but in the hands of an accomplished epic poet, it is also a poetic device. And an intelligent audience (the narratee) may be expected to remember, in book 13, this announcement in book 5. See Marks 2008, 52, Bowie 2014 ad 13.136-8, Van der Mije 2020, 17.

In the first part of my paper, in which I gave my reasons for arguing that the Phaeacians are spared, I took my evidence from the passage in book 13 alone, but we can now add Zeus' policy as presented in books 1 and 5 as one more reason; given his policy of promoting justice, how could it be acceptable to Zeus that the Phaeacians should now suffer as a result of his own plan to compensate Odysseus for his undeserved sufferings? Especially considering that what the Phaeacians did was not just good for Odysseus but good in itself: they bestowed hospitality on one who deserved it. Were Zeus not to check Poseidon, he would, in compensating one decent man for his undeserved sufferings, allow a whole decent people to suffer undeservedly – hardly a gain for justice.

This works two ways: Zeus' general policy in the *Odyssey* confirms the results of an independent examination of 13.125-187, and those results confirm his general policy.

Zeus' Policy of Justice in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

Zooming out even further, I would suggest that this policy of Zeus' can be witnessed throughout the *Odyssey* and arguably even in the *Iliad*. Essentially, Zeus is concerned that mortals should act justly and receive justice – from among themselves and from the gods. However, in individual cases, other considerations – especially keeping the peace among the gods and, in so doing, upholding universal order – will override the claims of justice, and in the *Iliad*, they almost invariably do.[14]

An example of this – and a context that is often cited by scholars as evidence for the claim that the Iliadic gods, including Zeus, are immoral or

14. See Marks 2016 and Allan 2006, 1-15. The only positive indication from the narrative of the *Iliad* that Zeus promotes impartial justice in that poem too is (to my awareness) the debate in Il. 24 about the burial of Hector. I would characterize the initiating rôle Apollo plays here as corresponding to that of Athena in *Odyssey* 1 concerning Odysseus: both gods act as champion of their favourite, using general moral concepts to win Zeus over – in both cases, with success; see Allan 2006, 13-15.

at best amoral[15] – is the divine assembly at the beginning of Il. 4. After the duel between Paris and Menelaus, in which Paris was miraculously saved, the Greeks and Trojans agree that Menelaus is the winner and are about to settle their conflict peacefully. But Zeus intervenes; he starts to tease Hera and Athena for their passivity, and as a result the truce is broken, and the war continues.

It is quite shocking, at first sight, that Zeus, if he has any concern for justice at all, should ignore the appeal made to him by both parties to uphold the truce and punish the one who breaks it (Il. 3.276-291; 298-301); worse, he instigates its breach himself. But the fact of the matter is that stopping the war was not an option for Zeus: not only was the destruction of Troy inevitable in any case – Hera and Athena had demanded it long ago and it was a settled matter – but Zeus himself had only recently promised Thetis to make the Greeks pay for the insults inflicted upon her son Achilles, a promise he could not refuse her because he was in her debt. And to keep that promise, the war must be resumed. But he shows his personal reluctance to break the peace in leaving it to Hera to insist that Troy must be destroyed.[16]

In the *Odyssey*, we have (I would argue) not a different *world view* but a different *world*.[17] Many gods felt strongly about Troy, and Zeus had to balance conflicting claims, but in the *Odyssey*, only Poseidon and Athena feel strongly about Odysseus, leaving Zeus more leeway for his general policy of justice. Nevertheless, Zeus felt constrained, in Iliadic fashion, to give way to Poseidon's anger in the case of Odysseus.

And one can understand why: Odysseus had unnecessarily taunted the Cyclops, quite literally adding insult to injury, although he knew that he

15. For an eloquent statement of this position see Van Erp Taalman Kip 2000 (see 386-392 on the divine scene in Il. 4).

16. Zeus regularly avoids making unjust demands himself, as Marks 2016 shows.

17. This is the central tenet of Allan 2006. I also agree with him that we should not expect to see justice prevail at all times, because "even Zeus cannot interfere constantly in other gods' spheres of influence" (sc. in either poem), but I disagree with his view that the fate of the Phaeacians is another instance where Zeus gives way (p. 19-21).

was dealing with a son of Poseidon. In his triumphant mood, he could not resist giving his own name, as if he were unassailable now. He even provoked Poseidon himself by saying that the god would not be able to restore his son's eyesight. Even if this is never qualified as ἀτασθαλίη (in contrast to the deeds of Aegisthus and Odysseus' companions, who ignored explicit divine warnings), thus to challenge a powerful god comes close, and I do not see how Zeus could have found an excuse for it which Poseidon, whose concern is not universal justice but his own status, could have accepted.

Zeus is well aware of Poseidon's mentality, and in his conversation with him about the Phaeacians, he wisely does not bring up their hospitality and decency.[18] Instead, he hints that they did not really challenge Poseidon's status; they are not like "someone who, giving way to his power and strength, treats you disrespectfully" (13.143f.). Zeus seems to be hinting: Odysseus did treat you disrespectfully, and I went along with your demand that he be punished for it, but the Phaeacians did not, and so I do not think they deserve punishment.[19]

Some scholars have been unhappy with the whole passage and even proposed removing it.[20] I see no reason for this: it is well composed and the objections against it are not compelling. But it is true that if this passage (including Poseidon's warning to Nausithous in book 8) were absent from

18. Athena's appeal to justice on behalf of Odysseus is the mirror image of this: to attain her personal aim, she appeals to justice, which is what Zeus cares about, whereas Zeus, to attain justice, appeals to Poseidon's status, which is what *he* cares about. Van Erp Taalman Kip 2000, 401 observes that the Iliadic gods "never talk about justice." That may be for the same reason; if hurt feelings are to be appeased, moralizing is usually not a good idea. Also, on the level of the communication between narrator and narratee, explicit discussions of moral issues would jeopardize the artistic appeal of the works, as Van Erp Taalman Kip notes (401f.).

19. In my 2020 paper, I argue that "someone who, relying on his strength, is disrespectful to gods" hints at Poseidon's own son Polyphemus, the very person Poseidon is avenging. That it could refer to Odysseus occurred to me later (thus also Bierl 2020, 347). We cannot be certain, since all of this is implicit subtext, and in fact the two references may both be valid; *ἀνδρῶν* (13.143) does not exclude a reference to Polyphemus, because as J. Burgess argues in this volume, Cyclopes are also classed as men.

20. See Bierl 2020, 342

our *Odyssey*, we probably would not miss it: after Odysseus was left asleep on the beach in line 125, the story could smoothly continue with his waking up in line 187. Why then did the poet insert it?

I have commented on Bierl's idea about the metapoetic function of the ship's petrification above (note 364); De Jong sees "a double function. (i) it emphatically marks the end of Poseidon's anger against Odysseus […]. (ii) it explains why, in the time of the narrators and the narratees, no one ever sees the Phaeacians".[21] But to start with this second function, the absence of the Phaeacians in Homer's own world does not need explanation to the same extent as the absence of the wall in the nearby Troad did,[22] as the escorting of Greeks is not presented as frequent; the fact that they recall the escort of Rhadamanthys (7.321-326) speaks volumes. And as to De Jong's first function, does this episode really mark the end of Poseidon's anger? It seems rather to indicate that Poseidon's anger is still alive and is now extended to the Phaeacians, who had helped Odysseus. We already know, from Tiresias (11.119-134), that Poseidon's anger is *not* over and that Odysseus will have to appease him. And we also know, from Poseidon's own mouth (5.288f.), that for now, Poseidon will leave Odysseus in peace.

I would suggest another function for this episode: it presents Zeus to us as one who does not merely makes declarations on Olympus about impartial justice while his daughter and brother go about on earth practicing their quite partial justices, but as one who makes his justice happen and will do his best to prevent harm coming to innocent people, even if on occasion he has to make compromises (as in the case of Odysseus, whose harm he could not prevent but has at least redeemed) or manoeuvre skilfully (as in the case of the Phaeacians).

We may take Zeus' careful treatment of Poseidon as representing the

21. De Jong 2001 ad 13.125–87 (p. 320f).

22. The two scenes, Il. 7.445-463 and Od. 13.125-158 are otherwise very closely related; see Van der Mije 2020, 23f., 39. I note that the actual destruction of the wall is described (Il. 12.1-33), whereas that of Scheria is not; another indication, if you will, that it did not in fact happen in the *Odyssey*.

way he normally deals with his fellow Olympians; the situation we find in the *Iliad*, where he threatens other gods with violence (he never actually exerts it) is an anomaly.[23] In the *Odyssey*, where the world is at peace, we find the normal situation, and here in book 13, we see Zeus using tact and diplomacy rather than threats to achieve the breakage of the chain of revenge and to ensure that the virtuous Phaeacians are not only spared but are reconciled with their ancestor god.

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23. His threats to Athena, Hera and Poseidon (Il. 8. 401-408; 15.16-33, 162-167) are all conditioned by his reluctant but binding promise to Thetis (1.509f., 518-530).

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Christodoulos Zekas

DIVINE DISCOURSE AND THE END OF HOMER'S *ODYSSEY*

1. Introduction

The final resolution of the story in Homer's *Odyssey* is marked with a divine dialogue at 24.472-488 in which Zeus suggests that peace should at last be restored on Ithaca. The scene is integrated into the last section of the poem, the so-called 'Battle Episode' (24.413-548), which elaborates on the attempt of the suitors' kinsmen to avenge the killing of their loved ones and concludes with Odysseus' defence of his royal *oikos*. More specifically, after the reunion of the hero with his father (24.205-412) and the ensuing preparation of the Ithacans for battle (24.413-471) the scenery switches abruptly and we move to Olympus where Athena asks Zeus whether he plans war or peace for the Ithacans. Finding the question improper, Zeus replies that she has the freedom to make her own choice regarding the situation, given that the killing of the suitors was her own plan in the first place. However, he remarks, the appropriate outcome should be reconciliation amongst the people of Ithaca and the uninterrupted rule of Odysseus resulting in prosperity and peace. Subsequently, Athena descends from Olympus, and we are taken back to the human arena just before the confrontation between the two opposing factions begins.

In terms of the evolution of the story, a similar model of conversation on Olympus followed by action on earth can be found in most of the divine dialogues in the *Odyssey* in which a deity delivers a request before Zeus and then the action proceeds according to the decision made by the gods.[1]

1. For the generic model followed in divine assemblies in Homer, as well as in Near Eastern epic, see Louden 2011, 16-29; for the *Odyssey* in particular, see Marks 2008, 159-166. A notable, single divergence from this pattern can be seen in the Song of Ares and Aphrodite (*Od.* 8.266-366), in which Zeus does not participate in the conversation, the matter is

In the two divine assemblies in Books 1 and 5, in particular, again after a debate on Olympus, a god rushes down to earth to fulfil the divine edict (1.96-105, 5.43-54), while a comparable arrangement can be observed in the conversation between Zeus and Poseidon at 13.125-158, as well as in the Helius-Zeus scene at 12.376-388. As regards the final divine encounter, however, it is noteworthy that this differs markedly in its narrative brevity which distinguishes it from the usual pattern.

Critics have noted, not positively, the condensed form of this exchange in contrast with relevant scenes in the poem, which could suggest stylistic crudeness, mechanic attempts for balance with the first divine council, and an overall inferior quality.[2] Negative comments on the last divine council are in fact germane to the vexed question of the authenticity of the end of the *Odyssey*, which dates back to Alexandrian criticism.[3] Although the whole discussion on the so-called 'Continuation' of the poem is rather extensive even to be outlined here,[4] for the purpose of my argument I should

settled amongst other gods, while the action is confined to Olympus. A thorough examination of this matter is beyond the scope of my paper, but it should briefly be noted that these modifications seem to stem from the loose connection of the episode with the story of the *Odyssey*. For the Song of Ares and Aphrodite, see De Jong 2001, 206-209, Halliwell 2008, 77-86.

2. See Page 1955, 112-113, S. West 1989, 142 n. 90, Wender 1978, 63-64.

3. According to the scholia *ad Od*. 23.296 (Dindorf), Aristophanes and Aristarchus held that the poem concluded with the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope at *Od*. 23.296 (*ἀσπάσιοι λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμὸν ἵκοντο*, 'they gladly arrived at the site of their old bed'), and regarded the remaining lines up until the denouement of the poem as un-Homeric. For thorough discussions on these scholia, see mainly Erbse 1972, 166-177, S. West 1989, 118-120, Heubeck 1992, 342-345.

4. Comprehensive overviews of the discussion are: Cantinela 2004, xxxiii-xxxix, Rutherford 2013, 97-102. To these, one should add more recent studies that recognise head-on the challenges posed by the 'continuation' and employ them as means for further interpretation. See mainly: Christensen 2020, 201-273, whose discussion is informed by psychology and political theory; Marks 2008, 62-82, on the role of the gods; Loney 2019, 193-225, on the pattern of vengeance; Bakker 2020, on opposing forces that shape the end. Recent readings of the end of the *Odyssey* include: Barker and Christensen 2013, 182-193, Grethlein 2017, 243-269.

mention that criticism still holds valid for the rapid mode of narration,[5] which is a distinctive feature of the last divine assembly.

On this matter, a tenable solution has been provided by comparative work on the closure strategies of archaic Greek epic at large, which suggests that narrative density towards the end may not be a clumsy incident. Rather it should be regarded as a deliberate attempt of the poem to yield a sense of transcendent urgency so as to draw attention to the fact that the story is coming to a close very soon. Kelly, in particular, has conclusively argued that archaic epics employ *doublets*, which gradually shrink in length generating an anticlimactic effect and, in doing so, they pronounce the closure of the narrative. This so-called 'decreasing doublet' seems to operate in the last section of the *Odyssey* too, and more specifically between the skirmish with the suitors' kinsmen (24.489-548) and the *Mnesterophonia* (Book 22), the two *Nekyias* (24.1-204 and Book 11 respectively), the Ithacan assemblies at 24.420-471 and 2.1-259, as well as between the two divine councils at Books 24 and 1.[6]

In this paper, I employ Kelly's idea but take a step forward suggesting that the integration of the last Olympian assembly into the *Odyssey* is not sustained only by means of its structural and thematic associations with the council of the gods in Book 1. Equally important and despite its condensed form, this exchange showcases communicative strategies tantamount to the indirect tactics of conversation employed in the majority of divine dialogues in the *Odyssey*. According to the indirect mode of verbal interaction in the poem, interlocutors conduct the discussion mainly through hints, innuendos, and ambiguous statements. Direct confrontation is avoided or feigned, while speakers do not disclose their inner thoughts or assume the

5. See, more recently, a concise re-evaluation of the issue in S. West 2007, 5: "Those who maintain the authenticity of *Odyssey* 24 on the grounds that it is essential for the interpretation of the epic as a whole (…) play into the hands of those who find evidence of later addition in its stylistic and narrative awkwardnesses: their arguments convincingly present the considerations likely to have motivated a later continuator, but do nothing to mitigate the deficiencies of his work."

6. Kelly 2007, esp. 384-387.

main import for the outcome of the dialogue, thereby disavowing responsibility for the plot management.[7] From this perspective, I will discuss the interaction of the two deities, while at the same time calling attention to the close ties of the last Olympian scene with the entire spectrum of divine conversation in the *Odyssey*. This comparison will better illustrate that the discursive strategies here are largely in keeping with the ways in which gods put forward their claims in the rest of their speech exchanges in the poem. Further, it will demonstrate the extent to which the deities' tactics are altered and transformed by the urgent need that the narrative reach its completion very soon.

2. The type of the last divine dialogue

Before examining the Athena-Zeus tête-à-tête in detail, we need first to consider its broader structure vis-à-vis the context of related scenes in the *Odyssey*. The fact that here we have a conversation between the two principal deities of the poem, with the tutelary goddess asking for guidance and the divine ruler delineating the next stages of the story, certainly recalls, and even aligns this dialogue with, the divine councils in Books 1 and 5.[8] Yet the fact that one may find in this exchange no indication of the gods deliberating in plenum as in the first and second divine assemblies suggests that this scene departs from the usual model.[9] A different suggestion by Louden, though, associates the last encounter with those instances in which a wrathful god complains to Zeus about a situation caused by the main hero (i.e. the scenes with Helius and Poseidon in Books 12 and 13 respectively). This approach rests on the premise that all three exchanges are placed after whole sequences of the story, they include a complaint against

7. For the indirect communicative practices of the gods in the *Odyssey*, see Zekas 2017, 725-727.

8. For the integration of the three divine councils in the *Odyssey*'s structure and their influence in the plot, see briefly Cook 2014.

9. See Müller 1966, 155, who speaks of the abandonment of the pattern of the divine assembly ("Der Verzicht auf den Rahmen einer Götterversammlung") in the Athena-Zeus dialogue.

the hero and trigger a lower level of destruction ('a contained apocalypse' in Louden's terms in contrast to, say, the upset of the natural order as in Helius' threat to Zeus in *Od*. 12.377-383).[10]

As valid as it seems in its general outline, one cannot accept this viewpoint altogether. It is certainly true that the final Olympian dialogue is placed after turmoil on Ithaca, while its aftermath elicits a mild, albeit discontinued, 'apocalypse'; plus, as we will see in the last section of this paper, Zeus' discourse does recall instances of his exchange with Poseidon in Book 13. Yet a serious objection would be that Athena's attitude here is not, strictly speaking, that of the wrathful deity. Although traces of divine fury can be found in the goddess' relating violence as one option of the story (24.475-476), there is no explicit mention of her anger as with Helius (12.376) and Poseidon (13.125-127).[11] Furthermore, her questions do not take the form of a complaint either against the behaviour of the relatives or in favour of Odysseus.[12] In fact, this is the only single moment where the mentor deity does not take an openly supportive stance towards the hero but is concerned with the fortune of the entire people of Ithaca. It should be added that this altered posture of the goddess may well shed light on her ambiguous activity in the ensuing melee, where at first she incites confrontation with the suitors' kin (24.516-519) to then put, with the assistance of Zeus, a halt to the fight (24.539-544).

All things considered, it seems more reasonable, then, to give credit to the exchange's affinity to both types of divine scenes: on the one hand, the first and second assemblies, which feature the mentor deity in support of the protagonist; on the other hand, the divine scenes of the wrathful type. And the combined texture that is produced suggests a startling alignment

10. Louden 2011, 17-22, 304-306.

11. Cf. earlier discussion in Louden 1999, 102 that acknowledges the differences between Poseidon and Helius on the one hand, Athena on the other, and views the goddess as "perhaps the least 'elemental' and most 'modern' (…) and ethical of the narrative pattern's three wrathful deities."

12. *Pace* Marks 2008, 74, 163-164, who sees a complaint in Athena's speech.

with the requirements of the present stage of the narrative, which strains against conflicting tendencies: first, the need that the story reach its completion very soon, and second the boiling aggression of the two rival factions that threatens the very possibility of closure. In my view, this novel condition of antagonistic pressures makes for a unique combination in structure, allowing to unfold both the ongoing hostility and the narrative tension that this hostility generates, while also working towards resolution. At the same time, the hybrid nature of the scene reinforces an additional sense of completion in that it resonates with earlier instances of divine communication, thereby highlighting this speech exchange as one of the most compact in meaning and richest in allusions in the entire poem.

3. The transition to the dialogue

Even before the beginning of the dialogue proper, the technique of accelerated narrative pace is initially apparent in the lack of any substantial introduction, which would otherwise soften the shift between the previous account and the ensuing tête-à-tête. In fact, both the transition to Olympus and the introduction to the conversation are made by means of a single line: *αὐτὰρ Ἀθηναίη Ζῆνα Κρονίωνα προσηύδα*, 'In the meantime, Athena addressed Zeus, son of Cronus' (24.472).[13]

It is worth observing that this rapid mode is not ordinary practice in Olympian scenes, where the narrative specifically calls attention to a transition to conversation with a preface to the opening speech.[14] Accordingly, the first assembly heralds its beginning with Zeus' recollection of Aegisthus (1.28-31), in the second council we are transferred to the discussion again with a reference to memory, this time Athena's reflection on Odysseus' miseries (5.5-6), while in Book 13 the Poseidon-Zeus scene is capped with the Sea-god's recall of his threats to the hero (13.125-127).

13. I am quoting the *Odyssey* from the edition of Von Der Mühll, 1962, and the *Iliad* from the edition of Monro and Allen, 1920. All translations from Greek are my own.

14. Kirk 1962, 250: "Athene addresses Zeus –the transition to Olympus is not even mentioned, and its startling suddenness is unparalleled in the rest of Homer."

Even the brief tête-à-tête between Helius and Zeus is prepared by means of Odysseus' invocation to the gods and Lampetie's message to Helius (12.371-375). And in all these cases there is a marked change of scenery, which explains the necessity for a transition: Zeus' statement signals the first speaking instance in the poem, Athena's complaint follows from her appearance on earth, Poseidon's protest comes after Odysseus' transportation to Ithaca by the Phaeacians, and Helius' demand on Olympus ensues after the devouring of the cattle on Thrinacia. Yet, we may find a similarly rapid transition from earth to Olympus in *Iliad* 18: after Patroclus' dead body has been attended by the Achaeans, the scene changes abruptly, again with a single line, to a conversation between Zeus and Hera (*Ζεὺς δ' Ἥρην προσέειπε κασιγνήτην ἄλοχόν τε*, 'Zeus addressed his sister and wife', *Il.* 18.356).[15] Edwards speaks of "an intentionally sharp juxtaposition" concluding Zeus' help to the Trojans that began in Book 1;[16] but apart from the wider ramifications of this dialogue, it seems that in both cases the Olympian scenes are intended to be regarded as an immediate sequence to the previous narrative. Moreover, in the context of the closing lines of the *Odyssey*, the sudden swift to Olympus that accelerates the narrative pace may echo the tension and instability of a precarious situation that needs to be addressed urgently, since the revenge of the Ithacans is about to resume.[17]

4. Athena's dilemma

Having considered the abrupt tone generated by the introduction to the scene, it is now time to examine the condensed form of the exchange (as

15. Erbse 1972, 241-242, has already noted this parallel, plus *Il.* 16.430-432 and 22.165-167; Moulton 1974, 165 n. 51, attaches *Il.* 8.198-200 to the above; additionally, Heubeck 1992, 411, mentions *Il.* 4.1 and *Od.* 13.125. Although in all these cases the leap is almost as brief (it is marked either by one and a half lines or slightly more), the change is not equally abrupt: the transition either recaps the previous narrative, while giving an indication of what follows (*Il.* 8.198-200, 16.430-432, 22.165-167), or it provides an adequate introduction to the ensuing scene (*Il.* 4.1-6, *Od.* 13.125-127).

16. Edwards 1987, 276; see also Edwards 1991, 188.

17. Similarly, Moulton 1974, 166.

this is mainly captured in Athena's speech) and the indirect tactics of the two deities in formulating their claims about the next stages of the story. Let us begin with Athena's questions that target Zeus' hidden agenda on the action (24.473-476):

> *ὦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων,*
> *εἰπέ μοι εἰρομένῃ· τί νύ τοι νόος ἔνδοθι κεύθει;*
> *ἦ προτέρω πόλεμόν τε κακὸν καὶ φύλοπιν αἰνὴν*
> *τεύξεις, ἦ φιλότητα μετ' ἀμφοτέροισι τίθησθα;*
>
> *Our father, son of Cronus and supreme among rulers, answer my question. What is really hidden in your mind? Will you make evil war and terrible strife, or are you going to establish peace between both sides?*

Athena's discourse commences with a solemn address to the sky father that evokes his overwhelming supremacy upon the divine realm: the opening formulaic line *ὦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων* (24.473), which overtly resonates with the first divine gathering (1.45, 81), signifies the goddess' intimate relationship with her father alongside the latter's privileged status as the ultimate ruler of the gods. This address serves as a natural transition to a succession of enquires about his preferred evolution of events to either incite warfare or impose peace.

It is noteworthy that the goddess' main concern seems altered in comparison with the first and second councils. At 1.45-62 Athena has targeted Odysseus' toils as a result of divine attitude, while at 5.7-20 she adds to the hardships the hero faces the indifference of the people of Ithacans towards him plus the danger his son will face from the suitors. In the third council, however, Athena is not immediately concerned with the hero but, as I mentioned earlier, she is preoccupied with the state of affairs in Ithaca.[18] Certainly, her questions presuppose anxiety about the protagonist,

18. Müller 1966, 156. Danek 1998, 504, observes the omission of the impossible alternative that Odysseus could be defeated –an issue settled by Athena's earlier reassurance to the hero about potential perils after the slaughter of the suitors at *Od*. 20.41-51.

but principally they reflect the fact that the story has taken social dimensions, which cannot be put aside or even mentioned en passant. Now that the contenders of the royal throne have been eliminated, the fortune of the Ithacans is more than ever aligned with Odysseus' fate, and this outcome should be the primary concern of the final negotiation on Olympus. Furthermore, as regards the position of this speech towards the finale of the poem, it is rather telling that Athena, in enquiring about the prolongation of fighting or the imposition of concord, in essence she asks Zeus about the continuation or the closing of the *Odyssey*. In that sense, not only do her questions constitute a decisive instance by which the audience may be prepared for the impending denouement, but also evince the openness of performance during which an epic has the potential to either conclude its story or be continued in thematically associated poems.

The abbreviation in Athena's speech is first and foremost apparent in the omission of any background information about the story. In the *Odyssey,* the inclusion of explanatory material in questions is the most frequent practice,[19] and particularly Athena's discourse in other related scenes is distinctively embellished with details or descriptive summaries of her principal topic of concern. In the first divine gathering, the goddess employs a succession of enquiries so as to prompt Zeus to take some serious action in support of the hero (1.59-62), in which case her questions are well motivated after a long and touching presentation of Odysseus' trials (1.48-59). Similarly, in the second council Athena's demand to the gods that they initiate the hero's release from the island of Calypso is conveyed through her resentment at the supposed abandonment of the main character by his own people, his tortures, and the precarious position of his son (5.11-20). In the last Olympian scene, however, we are a faced with a notable omission of the story's backdrop –a feature that seems to contribute significantly towards the construction of a remarking sense of urgency in two respects. On the one hand, we are impelled to read the current encounter

19. Minchin 2007, 86.

as an intrinsic part of a larger episode whose impending action directs the conversation, and in that sense Athena's speech, and the conversation altogether, should be read as a close follow-up to the action on earth. On the other hand, both the absence of a transition from the narrative to the dialogue proper and the lack of motivation within the goddess' speech invite the audience's awareness about structural variations that may signal a considerable difference in the course of the poem, thus alerting its coming to an end.

It is striking and rather telling for the nuanced discourse of the *Odyssey* that, despite the condensed form of her speech, the goddess manages to concoct a careful rhetoric with indirect strategies that pave the way for Zeus' active involvement in the action. On the surface, Athena's discourse may give the impression of being quite clear-cut in that she is putting two plain questions before her father. On closer inspection though, her objective is put into effect indirectly in the following respects: first, by attempting to attribute responsibility to the divine king for the plot management; and second, by inciting his active engagement in the action, while at the same time trying to influence his dictum.

In line with the opening focus on Zeus' omnipotence by means of the solemn formulaic line at 24.473, in the rest of her speech Athena designates her father as the divinity of the utmost authority in the direction of the narrative. The request that the supreme ruler divulge the secrets of his 'mind' (*νόος*) foregrounds Zeus' hidden agenda for the story and his crucial role in the direction of the narrative. In fact the word *νόος*, which rather openly signifies either 'mind', 'will', 'intention', or 'plan',[20] is particularly telling for the understanding of the entire divine planning of the *Odyssey*. Throughout the poem both the divine king and his daughter constantly disavow the main responsibility for the plot by deflecting it onto each other. In the first assembly, before Athena announced her project, Zeus proposed that the gods in plenum consider Odysseus' homecoming (1.76-79),

20. *LfgrE*, s.v. *νόος*. See also Marks 2008, 39-40.

while in the second council he responded to Athena's accusations by ascribing to her the νόος (conception) of the plan (5.23-24). In the last Olympian gathering, we come across similar tactics but in a different mode in that here is the first instance in the poem that Athena overtly refers to the νόος of her father and attributes to him blatantly the main role for the design of the story. This altered, more daring stance in that Athena highlights Zeus supreme role, seems to indicate anxiety and impatience on the part of the goddess about the critical juncture that the story has reached, while at the same time, just before the closure of the narrative, marking a culmination in the relationship between the two gods.

Athena's endeavour to engage her father more energetically in the action is especially conspicuous in the ensuing questions that explore the role of Zeus even further than the mere act of articulating a reply. The conflict needs to be solved not solely by the edict of the divine king but additionally by means of his active involvement (*ἢ προτέρω πόλεμόν τε…/ τεύξεις, ἦ φιλότητα…τίθησθα*, 24.475-476). Again we come across a daring attitude of the goddess before Zeus, which seems novel in the *Odyssey*. In the assemblies in Books 1 and 5 Athena restricted herself to obliquely inciting her father to advance the hero's *nostos* (1.45-62, 5.7-20). Here under the pressure of the new turn of events and the needs of closure Athena encourages a more active engagement in the plot –a suggestion that anticipates Zeus' unparalleled intervention just before the very end when he hurls down a thunderbolt to restrain Odysseus' rampant ferocity so as to cease the fight (24.539-540).[21]

Finally, the goddess' attempt to prompt her father's involvement in the action is masterfully fused with her indirect strategy to steer Zeus' expected reply towards a certain direction. As can be inferred from two parallel pas-

21. On the intervention of the gods in the last section, see Marks 2008, 78-81, Grethlein 2017, 254-255, Ready 2019. In the attempt of Athena and Zeus to balance the two opposing parties Farenga 2006, 260-261, sees the introduction of Greek law. On Odysseus' unbridled impetus at the end, cf. Barker and Christensen 2013, 189: "epic glory is but a short step away from indiscriminate violence".

sages from the *Iliad* (4.15-16, 82-84) in which the noun-epithets *πόλεμος κακός* and *φύλοπις αἰνή*, plus the noun *φιλότης*, are again used in combination, both the negative colouring of war and the placing of peace at the conclusion of her utterance point toward a formulation that implicitly favours the second option.[22] Further, this interpretation is in keeping with the narrator's comment after the dialogue that Athena indeed favoured peace as a solution even before she asked Zeus' counsel (*πάρος μεμανῖαν Ἀθήνην*, 'Athena who desired this beforehand', 24.487).[23]

5. Zeus' open-ended closure to the *Odyssey*

As it is evident from the discussion so far, Athena's speech, despite its brevity, demonstrates that the goddess is at great pains to carefully engage her father in the action, as well as prompt him to single out the peaceful alternative, eschewing the prolongation of strife. The final touch heralding the definite terminus to the story will next be sealed by Zeus' narrative that delineates an action suitable for a happy ending[24] and whose outstanding prominence is tactfully underlined by its placement in the middle of the Battle Episode.[25] Unlike the enquiry of his daughter, though, his reply is not that condensed. It extends longer than the previous speech, but still refrains from providing a basis for prolonging the conversation, in which sense this speech too operates along the lines of the decreasing doublet

22. On the first occasion (*Il.* 4.15-16), in the divine assembly after the duel between Menelaus and Paris, Zeus attempts to manipulate the course of events by suggesting that the gods should impose peace, much to the dissatisfaction of Athena and Hera. On this passage Kirk 1985, 332, observes: "Verse 15 is a rising threefolder whose flow is brought to an abrupt halt by the runover-verb ὄρσομεν (subjunctive, like *βάλωμεν*), and seems to leave the terser alternative, *ἦ φιλότητα*…, as the more emphatic choice." See also Coray et al. 2017, 23. Similarly, in the second case lines 4.15-16 are repeated with minor changes in a *tis*-speech of Trojans and Achaeans later in the narrative (*Il.* 4.82-84) which again seems to favour peace over war; on this passage, see also De Jong 1987, 72-73, Coray et al. 2017, 45-46.

23. Cf. Benardete 2008, 140: "If the text is sound, Athena had always intended to establish peace; otherwise it is a last-minute arrangement of Zeus."

24. De Jong 2001, 585.

25. Bertman 1968, 120.

technique. Zeus' statements run as follows (24.478-486):

> *τέκνον ἐμόν, τί με ταῦτα διείρεαι ἠδὲ μεταλλᾷς;*
> *οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοῦτον μὲν ἐβούλευσας νόον αὐτή,*
> *ὡς ἦ τοι κείνους Ὀδυσεὺς ἀποτείσεται ἐλθών;*
> *ἔρξον ὅπως ἐθέλεις· ἐρέω δέ τοι ὡς ἐπέοικεν.*
> *ἐπεὶ δὴ μνηστῆρας ἐτείσατο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,*
> *ὅρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες ὁ μὲν βασιλευέτω αἰεί,*
> *ἡμεῖς δ' αὖ παίδων τε κασιγνήτων τε φόνοιο*
> *ἔκλησιν θέωμεν· τοὶ δ' ἀλλήλους φιλεόντων*
> *ὡς τὸ πάρος, πλοῦτος δὲ καὶ εἰρήνη ἅλις ἔστω.*
>
> *My child, why do you ask me and search these things? Was it not you who devised this plan that Odysseus would return and indeed punish those men? Do as you like; but I will tell you how things should be. Since godlike Odysseus punished the suitors, after they make oaths of trust, let him rule forever and let us put oblivion upon the slaughter of children and brothers. These may be friends with each other like before, and let wealth and peace be sufficient.*

At first the father of the gods seems surprised at Athena's enquires, but then relates, in the form of a suggestion, his own plan for the appropriate route of the events. Much like the previous speech, the words of the supreme king may appear straightforward and uncomplicated; as we will see, however, when set against the background of the story and the rest of divine discourse in the *Odyssey*, Zeus' overall stance here is deeply ambiguous in that it initially evinces abstinence from any responsibility for the planning of the hero's *nostos*, while at the same time decisively directing the action.

At the outset the divine ruler hurls two successive counter-questions that clearly serve as a blocking device for the previous enquires. Here again Zeus' privileged position as the one who controls the dialogue is revealed, since, as has been observed in a study of question strategies in the *Odyssey*, only speakers at the same level or of higher rank are permitted to answer a

question with a counter-question.[26] Zeus' contrived reluctance to reply (*τί με ταῦτα διείρεαι ἠδὲ μεταλλᾷς*, 24.478) is further specified by means of a rhetorical question (*οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοῦτον μὲν ἐβούλευσας νόον αὐτή, / ὡς ἦ τοι κείνους Ὀδυσεὺς ἀποτείσεται ἐλθών*, 24.479-480)[27] that targets Athena for the initial conception of the *nostos* design. Thus, the sky father distances himself from any substantial involvement in the overall plan, destabilising the assurance of his daughter that he is the deity whose will determines the action.

This reserved and, as it were, aloof stance is not an attitude of Zeus we are not familiar with in the *Odyssey*, for indeed it seems to be a typical feature of his to answer demanding appeals or accusations by redirecting responsibility either to his interlocutor or to a third party. Accordingly, in the first assembly his versatility escapes the allegations of negligence and anger toward the hero by elaborating on the wrath of Poseidon and its background (1.68-75).[28] Even more striking are the structural and formulaic similarities with the second council. In that scene, by again calling attention to the original conception of Athena's project (with two lines which are repeated verbatim here, 5.23-24 = 24.479-480), he escapes her accusation that the protagonist's homecoming is being inexcusably delayed. Moreover, it is the *manner* in which Zeus typically responds that underlines the close affinity between the two passages: again we see initial annoyance and correction of Athena's discourse followed by the formulation of guidelines for action, this time directed at both Athena and Hermes (5.25-27, 29-42).[29]

It is worth observing that, by disclaiming all responsibility for the design, Zeus glosses over the dialogic process that initially led to its expres-

26. Minchin 2007, 132.

27. For the use of the particle *ἤτοι* (= *μέν*) instead of the construction *ἦ τοι* (really [for you]) here, see Ruijgh 1981, 283-284. Denniston 1950, 553-554, accepts the writing *ἤτοι* (= *ἦ τοι*), but "perhaps τοι here has lost some of its vividness".

28. Loney 2019, 217.

29. See also Marks 2008, 75.

sion: in the opening divine gathering of the *Odyssey* Athena's proposal for the arrangement of the action (1.81-95) comes through Zeus' account of the example of Aegisthus, which functions as counter-example for the hero. As such, in that scene the background to the articulation of the next stages of the story involved a great deal of partaking from the father of the gods too. Moreover, the rhetorical question at 24.479-480 that Athena initially designed the revenge does not do justice to her concerns. Taken at face value, the initial plan of the goddess covers the storyline up until the return of the hero (1.81-87), while the import for the vengeance against the suitors could not be solely attributed to Athena.[30] These two storylines, namely *nostos* and retribution, embrace the action until the *Mnesterophonia* (Book 22) and Odysseus' reunion with Penelope (Book 23). And yet, they do not include any instructions about the aftermath of the revenge, let alone the management of the problematic situation with the suitors' relatives. Hence, we are now at a stage beyond Athena's original planning, and the outcome needs to be addressed by the god who holds the ultimate power.

It could be suggested that the cornerstone of the crafty and controlling way in which the sky father manages the conversation is his ambiguous reference to the freedom of action (*ἔρξον ὅπως ἐθέλεις· ἐρέω δέ τοι ὡς ἐπέοικεν*, 24.481). According to this 'pose of cooperative disinterest' as has been aptly called,[31] the speaker, on the surface, offers complete liberty for handling the situation, but in essence limits it by outlining his preferred and suitable course of events –an indirect strategy that reveals his intention to manipulate the planning in a covert manner. As such, he may supposedly have escaped the role, imposed on him by Athena, of the god who determines the story, but actually reassumes shrewdly his position as the

30. The revenge plan was first implied by Zeus himself in the example of Orestes' killing of Aegisthus (*Od.* 1.40-41), and outside the context of the first divine assembly, it was mentioned by Athena-Mentes as a wish to Telemachus (*Od.* 1.253-266), was then imposed as Athena's design by Zeus at *Od.* 5.23-24, and finally was mentioned to the hero as a specific solution by the goddess upon his arrival on Ithaca (*Od.* 13.375-381).

31. Marks 2008, 77; 2014, 303.

supreme upholder of balance in both the human and divine realms by putting his final seal upon the completion of the poem.

A similar stance of Zeus can be seen in his dialogue with Poseidon at *Od*. 13.125-158. When the Sea-god protests about the Phaeacians (and the Olympian community) who dishonour him, the sky father cunningly diverts the complaint by privileging a general principle that may restore Poseidon's status: on occasions where a deity is dishonoured by a human, the latter should be punished (13.143-144).[32] This statement opens up the way for retribution against the Phaeacians, and finally resolves the issue of Poseidon's anger with the hero, at least for the time being. It is all the more striking that this passage displays analogies with Zeus' standpoint in the final dialogue. Here again we find the same formula for liberty to intervene in the human affairs (*ἔρξον ὅπως ἐθέλεις*, 'do as you wish', 13.145),[33] though this time expressed in a more individualised manner (*ὡς μὲν ἐμῷ θυμῷ δοκεῖ εἶναι ἄριστα*, 'as I think is best', 13.154) and without the veil of general acceptance (*ἐρέω δέ τοι ὡς ἐπέοικεν*, 'I will tell you how things should be', 24.481).

32. Danek 1998, 504.

33. In the *Iliad*, the attitude of Zeus is again marked with the formula *ἔρξον ὅπως ἐθέλεις* (*Il*. 4.37) in the divine assembly after the duel between Paris and Menelaus. Heubeck 1954, 44, sees similarities between this passage and the Athena-Zeus dialogue in *Odyssey* 24. However, other than the occurrence of the same formula the association seems somewhat loose (Moulton 1974, 165). More important compositional affinities can be found between *Od*. 24.472-488 and *Iliad* 22.166-187 in which the formulaic variant *ἔρξον ὅπῃ δή τοι νόος ἔπλετο* (*Il*. 22.185) occurs. Here, again in the context of an assembly, we have a conversation between Zeus and Athena (on the fortune of Hector), but the order is reversed in terms of speaker and content: it is Zeus asking that the gods consider two options (to rescue Hector or let him at the hands of Achilles) and Athena voicing surprise at his proposal. Moulton 1974, 165, suggests further similarities: both scenes are associated with a battle on earth, and Zeus yields to Athena's wishes (although the latter is only tentatively correct). Elmer 2013, 267 n. 35, views both passages as indicative of the complementarity of Athena and Zeus in decision-making. Saïd 2011, 221, points out that the offer of liberty in *Od*. 24.481 signals an unprecedented result in the course of Zeus' interventions: in this case the result is peace, whereas in the rest of the instances (*Il*. 4.37, 22.185; *Od*. 13.145) "Zeus' response leads to the destruction of a city or a man".

In the last section of the speech Zeus, contrary to his previous ambiguous stance, firmly reassumes his role as the ultimate authority in directing the plot, but refrains from touching on issues that may disturb the balance on Olympus and jeopardize the closure of the epic. Accordingly, he proposes the involvement of both deities towards a definite resolution, while voicing his own agenda about the prior conditions for a prosperous outcome: the two factions "will conclude a reliable treaty",[34] Odysseus will rule forever, and the divinely effected *ἔκλησις*, which signifies 'oblivion', 'erasure of memory', or even "the act of forcing someone to forget",[35] will sanction the prosperity to come (24.482-486). Apart from the hortative θέωμεν (which I discuss later), the guidelines are conveyed in successive imperative forms (*βασιλευέτω, φιλεόντων, ἔστω*), thereby imbuing the will of the supreme ruler with the tone of an order.[36] But, as we will see, they are far from being straightforward and clear. On the contrary, they are so concise and vague that appear enigmatic in that they do not specify the process of imposing peace, they silence important challenges that the hero will face in the future, while also leaning towards fantasy.[37]

The lack of detailed guidance may well rest on the partially extra-textual application of the plan, which minimises the need for more explicit plot delineation. Although the current passage delineates future events, echoing the Homeric 'table of contents' speech found in both divine assemblies (1.81-95, 5.29-42),[38] the upcoming evolution of the story lies, to a great extent, beyond the narrative limits of the poem. The lack of specificity in the

34. This rendering in Heubeck 1992, 413. Derived from the practice of 'cutting' the victims in ritual sacrifices, the expression *ὅρκια πιστὰ τέμνειν* ('to cut reliable treaties') stands metaphorically for making a treaty (Kirk 1985, 274; Karavites 1992, 64; Berti 2006, 184; Torrance 2014, 140-141). The formula *ὅρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες* is *hapax* in the *Odyssey* but common in the *Iliad* (6x), with variations in the verb-form (*Il.* 2.124, 3.73, 94, 252, 256, 19.191).

35. Bakker 2020, 59. Cf. Christensen 2020, 270: "complete forgetfulness".

36. Saïd 2011, 221.

37. Scodel 1998, 15, Barker 2009, 131-132, Grethlein 2017, 255.

38. For the 'table of contents' speech in the *Odyssey*, see De Jong 2001, 15-16.

instructions is further enhanced by the unclear syntax in 24.483-485. Although the two parties of oath-taking are undoubtedly Odysseus and the suitors' kinsmen, still the subject of ταμόντες is not precisely mentioned, while the construction *ὁ μέν (βασιλευέτω)…ἡμεῖς δε (θέωμεν)* might generate some confusion as to the role of the gods in the treaty.[39] Thus, the omission of δέ in M. L. West's latest edition of the *Odyssey* is certainly on the right track insofar as it weakens the association of ἡμεῖς (the gods) with ὁ μέν (Odysseus), thereby attenuating the perplexed meaning.[40] Even so, a slight anacoluthon may still remain, which has been regarded as a way of the text to anticipate the burst of the tension on Ithaca and as a consequence the final, rapid intervention of the two deities in the ensuing conflict.[41]

Furthermore, as has been fittingly suggested, there is a notable tendency towards fantasy in the instructions: Odysseus' kinship is projected to eternity, the *mnesterophonia* is to be forgotten, peace and wealth will be in abundance.[42] I would submit that fantasy here is combined with a pervasive tone of hyperbole, which obfuscates the challenges, even adversities, that the end of the *Odyssey* and its aftermath entail. The elusiveness in Zeus' delineation of the events to come may perhaps be better illustrated if the instructions are set against Teiresias' prophecy in the *Nekyia*, which may seem enigmatic in some details but overall presents a more inclusive view of Odysseus' *nostos* (11.100-137).[43] The prophecy commences with

39. Erbse 1972, 223 n. 147, S. West 1989, 129, Heubeck 1992, 412-413, Benardete 2008, 140, Loney 2019, 220-221.

40. M. L. West 2017.

41. Heubeck 1992, 413, Loney 2019, 220-221.

42. Benardete 2008, 140, Christensen 2020, 229.

43. On Teiresias' prophecy, the secondary literature is rather extensive; see Duckworth 1933, 32-33, Peradotto 1990, 59-75, De Jong 2001, 277-279 with bibliography; also, Gartziou-Tatti 2010, 17-20, on the prophecy's narrative times from a Genettian perspective. The foretelling is notoriously cryptic regarding details of Odysseus' demise: for the ambiguous meanings of *ἐξ ἁλός* ('[when away] from the sea' or '[originating] from the sea') and *ἀβληχρός* ('gentle' or 'slow') see Burgess 2014, Burgess 2017, 34-36, Tsagalis 2015, 392-393, Arft 2019, 160-161. The indeterminacy of the prophecy and its fulfillment beyond the end of the *Odyssey* has incited further interpretations: Purves 2010, 70-89, discusses

the Thrinacia incident and the potential demise of the comrades; but more pertinent to my discussion here is the part that recounts the hero's departure from Ithaca after the killing of the suitors (*Od*. 11.119-137):

αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν μνηστῆρας ἐνὶ μεγάροισι τεοῖσι
κτείνῃς ἠὲ δόλῳ ἢ ἀμφαδὸν ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
ἔρχεσθαι δὴ ἔπειτα, λαβὼν εὐῆρες ἐρετμόν,
εἰς ὅ κε τοὺς ἀφίκηαι, οἳ οὐκ ἴσασι θάλασσαν
ἀνέρες οὐδέ θ' ἅλεσσι μεμιγμένον εἶδαρ ἔδουσιν·
οὐδ' ἄρα τοὶ ἴσασι νέας φοινικοπαρήους,
οὐδ' εὐήρε' ἐρετμά, τά τε πτερὰ νηυσὶ πέλονται.
σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε λήσει·
ὁππότε κεν δή τοι ξυμβλήμενος ἄλλος ὁδίτης
φήῃ ἀθηρηλοιγὸν ἔχειν ἀνὰ φαιδίμῳ ὤμῳ,
καὶ τότε δὴ γαίῃ πήξας εὐῆρες ἐρετμόν,
ἕρξας ἱερὰ καλὰ Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι,
ἀρνειὸν ταῦρόν τε συῶν τ' ἐπιβήτορα κάπρον,
οἴκαδ' ἀποστείχειν ἕρδειν θ' ἱερὰς ἑκατόμβας
ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι,
πᾶσι μάλ' ἑξείης. θάνατος δέ τοι ἐξ ἁλὸς αὐτῷ
ἀβληχρὸς μάλα τοῖος ἐλεύσεται, ὅς κέ σε πέφνῃ
γήρᾳ ὕπο λιπαρῷ ἀρημένον· ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ
ὄλβιοι ἔσσονται. τὰ δέ τοι νημερτέα εἴρω.

Soon after you kill the suitors in your palace either by trickery or openly with a sharp bronze, then take a well-fitted oar and set out for those who are ignorant of the sea and eat food that is not mixed with salt; these men do not have knowledge of red-cheeked boats or well-fitted oars that be-

meta-narrative implications of Teiresias' words, viewing the itinerary from sea to inland as a movement "towards a new literary landscape" beyond epic poetry (72). Drawing on the latter alongside ancient allegorical interpretations and modern psychology, Christensen 2020, 275-289, provides a sensitive reading of the foretelling, and of Odysseus' course towards his end, that points towards self-transformation outside paradigmatic narratives and ways of thinking, for hero and audiences alike.

> *come wings for ships. I will give you a very clear sign and you won't miss it. When another wayfarer you encounter says that you carry a winnowing-fan on your shining shoulder, plant your well-fitted oar in the ground and make fine sacrifices to lord Poseidon (a sheep, a bull and a boar that mounts pigs). Then head back home and offer holy hecatombs to the immortal gods, who hold the wide sky, to all of them one by one. An easy death will reach you from the sea and will kill you, as you are worn out in comfortable old age; and around you the people will be prosperous. These I say are true.*

In much the same way as the father of gods narrates the future of Odysseus and the Ithacans, so too Teiresias' words, concluding with the prosperity of the people, project onto a time well beyond the completion of our poem. But dissimilarly to the instructions of the sky father, the foretelling dwells on a variant thread of the story, recounting the repercussions of Poseidon's wrath after the *mnesterophonia*: in order to placate the Sea-god Odysseus needs to resume his wanderings outside Ithaca and undertake yet another mission. This prospect imbues *nostos* with a sense wider than the return to homeland and the redemption of kingship in that it encompasses the restitution of the disrupted order in Odysseus' liaison with the gods. Extending on a cosmic scale, Teiresias' version of *nostos*, then, seems more inclusive than the one ordained by the divine king, whose ramifications are confined to Ithaca and the hero's interaction with humans. Nonetheless, it does not refute or invalidate Zeus' planning of the conclusion and the morrow of the *Odyssey*, insofar as both outcomes are crowned with similar social circumstances, namely the prosperity of the people (*ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ / ὄλβιοι ἔσσονται*, 11.136-137· *τοὶ δ' ἀλλήλους φιλεόντων / ὡς τὸ πάρος, πλοῦτος δὲ καὶ εἰρήνη ἅλις ἔστω*, 24.485-486).[44] On the contrary, with the imposition of oblivion which will come to establish peace on human level, Zeus' design paves the way for the next stage of the Odyssean saga, which

44. Burgess 2014, 119. Differently in Marks 2008, 85-96, who suggests that Zeus' instructions reject Teiresias' version of *nostos* as non-Homeric.

concerns the restitution of order in the protagonist's disturbed relationship with the Sea-god.

Zeus' omission of any reference to the corollaries of Poseidon's fury requires further comment. It may true that Athena's enquiries concerned the immediate consequences of the tension on Ithaca, but it should by now be clear that the guidelines' projection of Odysseus' unceasing reign onto an indefinite future suppresses crucial stages in this course: the necessity that the king resume his whereabouts, a possibly ominous void in the reign of Ithaca during his absence, and certainly the restoration of his troubled ties with the Sea-god. Naturally, Zeus is interested in appeasing the looming civil strife and reassuring about the happy ending, but the fact that he excludes all sinister implications from an otherwise prosperous destiny indicates a deliberate strategy on his part not to touch on issues that may turn out to be causes for further concern. Indeed, raising the issue of Poseidon's fury at this stage would most probably destabilise the impending coda to the poem, since in this case the story would have to explore two different threads: one concerning the hero's place within human society, the other his relationship with gods. And in fact, the latter would call for the prolongation of the narrative to a considerable extend –probably up to the length of a separate epic, analogous to the now lost *Telegony* that dealt in two books with the aftermath of the *Odyssey*.[45]

However, Zeus' attitude here is in keeping with his general stance regarding the Sea-god throughout the *Odyssey*. In the first council, the supreme ruler awaited Athena to bring up the matter of divine anger for discussion, in the second assembly there was no mention of his brother, while in his dialogue with the same deity in Book 13 Zeus treated him with high caution. Likewise, in the last heavenly scene the divine king restraints from touching on the issue of Poseidon's wrath and its implications on the protagonist's future which might put the conclusion of the poem in jeopar-

45. On the epic of *Telegony*, see Davies 1989, 84-91, M. L. West 2013, 288-315, Tsagalis 2015 with further bibliography. For other accounts of Odysseus after the end of the *Odyssey*, see Marks 2008, 83-111, Ready 2019, 120-127.

dy.[46] As such, the equilibrium on Olympus (and on earth) is upheld, and the epic may reach its completion without unnecessary disturbances.

Elusive and incomplete as they are, still the guidelines demonstrate Zeus' decisive role in managing the story. This is especially pronounced in the suggestion of the father of the gods for a shared role between him and Athena in the imposition of oblivion (*ἔκλησις*). As we have seen, contrary to the goddess' endeavour to engage her father in the action, at first Zeus repudiated any entanglement in the conception of the plan. Nonetheless, towards the end of his verdict the sky father corrects his daughter and reveals that his version of the conclusion should involve both deities in instituting a new order. Further, it is striking that Zeus' proposal recalls a suggestion articulated along similar lines in the first council. In that passage Zeus, in response to Athena's heart-breaking plea about Odysseus' plights, recommends that the gods deliberate in plenum regarding the hero's homeward journey (*Od*. 1.76-79):

> *ἀλλ' ἄγεθ' ἡμεῖς οἵδε περιφραζώμεθα πάντες*
> *νόστον, ὅπως ἔλθῃσι· Ποσειδάων δὲ μεθήσει*
> *ὃν χόλον· οὐ μὲν γάρ τι δυνήσεται ἀντία πάντων*
> *ἀθανάτων ἀέκητι θεῶν ἐριδαινέμεν οἷος.*
>
> *But come, let us all here think about his homecoming, how he returns. And Poseidon will put aside his anger, for he cannot dispute alone against the will of all the immortals.*

Zeus' proposal to the divine community is of utmost importance for it formally marks the activation of the hero's homecoming alongside the containment of Poseidon's fury –the latter at least as far as the poem lasts. In both instances the suggestion is expressed in first plural hortative (*περιφραζώμεθα, θέωμεν*), though one cannot help but notice the rapid shift in

46. Cf. Bakker 2020, 68: "The antagonism between Zeus and Poseidon is a conflict between closure and continuation, a conflict that in the end remains unresolved. Zeus can put an end to the social conflict at Ithaca, but he cannot control the hero's *nostos*."

Zeus' agency: in the first assembly the supreme ruler proposes further consideration of the planning, which does not necessarily include him as agent in the action. By contrast, in the final encounter he submits his own participation in the events to come, thus cementing his predominant role in directing and, essentially, in putting his final seal upon the plot.

According to this plot, oblivion of the massacre of the suitors is set as the prior condition for the imposition of the new state of affairs on human terrain, as well as pivotal in maintaining peace and prosperity. But the hardship entailed in amnesia in a moment of strife is not only underscored by its enforcement on the part of two deities; it is, further, insinuated in the very resonances of *ἔκλησις* itself –a term that echoes earlier instances of the story, while simultaneously engaging with its future. For one thing, *ἔκλησις* revises Eupeithes' previous statement about avenging the killing of the suitors at 24.434-435, which is conveyed along similar lines (*εἰ δὴ μὴ παίδων τε κασιγνήτων τε φονῆας / τεισόμεθ'*, 'if we do not avenge the murders of our children and bothers').[47] The state of Eupeithes' mourning, which cannot be forgotten (*ἄλαστον…πένθος*, 24.423), is thus disregarded and overturned by the divine imposition of amnesia, thus providing a diametrically opposed trajectory of the story.[48] Yet we have to bear in mind that oblivion should not be viewed as a one-sided concept in the sense that it cannot refer to Eupeithes and his fellow rivals only. As is strongly indicated in the ensuing skirmish whose accumulated tension from both sides makes divine intervention all the more needed, the idea of the erasure of the past embraces Odysseus and his group as well, insofar as they too should put the suitors' insolence and the relatives' revolt aside for the poem to conclude.

At the same time ἔκλησις, in resonating with the function of memory in other dialogues between the gods, echoes crucial instances of divine communication in the *Odyssey*. Most prominently, at the beginning of the first

47. See Loney 2019, 219.

48. For *πένθος ἄλαστον* in the *Odyssey* and its relation with unclear endings/unfinished stories, see Christensen 2020, 252-261.

assembly it is Zeus' remembrance of Aegisthus' example that sets in motion the very story of the poem (1.28-31). With reference to the same passage the account of Aegisthus is associated with an act of hybris, thereby marking memory as the driving force behind the restoration of insolence. In the second council, the discussion about Odysseus commences with Athena's memory of the hero's evils (5.5-6), while before Poseidon's complaint to Zeus about the Phaeacians escorting the hero to his homeland it is again the Sea-god's recollection of his threats against Odysseus that instigates the conversation (13.125-127). Thus, it seems fair to suggest that memory is a wide-ranging mental activity that operates either in favour of or in opposition to the hero, and in that regard it is deeply rooted in the core of the story. From a meta-poetic perspective, without the existence of memory there would be no narrative, much like the erasure of memory should bring the epic to a close.[49] As such, forgetfulness seems to constitute the final stage of memory, and perhaps it may not be a coincidence that the word ἔκλησις is a hapax legomenon, for indeed oblivion cannot have another place in the *Odyssey* other than its very end when all (main) matters are resolved or at least directed towards resolution.[50]

Again with reference to the first council there is, however, another aspect of amnesia that may seem incongruous with the moral code of the poem. Marks has argued that Zeus' final proposal for *ἔκλησις* poses a serious contradiction with the cycle of revenge as this is exemplified in the story of Aegisthus.[51] Loney, in his study on *tisis* in the *Odyssey*, has made a strong case for the disconnection of the final oblivion from the pattern of vengeance in the *Odyssey* on the grounds that an act of *tisis* provokes its requital, which in turn leads to further vengeance narratives, and these al-

49. See also Christensen 2020, 232-238, who, from a different viewpoint, rightly views *ἔκλησις* here as transgressive for the genre of epic poetry, but also instructive for audiences about the appropriate manner on how to end the *Odyssey*.

50. Cf. Loney 2019, 221: "The poet is coining new language to articulate an innovation in the way to deal with vengeance."

51. Marks 2008, 296-297, 302.

together form an open-ended process.[52] This generic pattern may be true to the extent that all clusters of *tisis* in the *Odyssey* contribute to the utmost *tisis*, which is the slaughter of suitors. That event has received more than adequate motivation throughout the poem so as to be regarded as transgressive and therefore a justified form of revenge. Further incidents of *tisis*, however, as that of the suitors' kin, which emanate from this single thread but have not received adequate motivation, decrease in narrative importance and are not given sufficient treatment. Thus the pattern of vengeance may appear indefinite but actually is not, since it operates and even expands only when revenge, either as a single act or as a chain of actions, has been satisfactorily accounted for in the narrative. As such, Poseidon's wrath, which has been motivated from the outset and progressively ever after, works all the way through Book 13 and has the potential to project even beyond the confines of the poem. By contrast, the revenge of the suitors' relatives, which comes up almost suddenly and without consistent preparation, is a topic that unsurprisingly dies out before the end.

The feasibility of a finalised *tisis* narrative should lead us back to Zeus' account of Aigisthus, according to which vengeance concludes with the killing of the throne's usurper. Although this presentation is selective, it certainly indicates that vengeance narratives do conclude at some point. Thus, it seems fair to suggest that in the last scene the supreme ruler does not contradict himself but merely reiterates the limits of revenge as these have been defined from the outset. By proposing a peaceful ending by means of forgetfulness, Zeus indicates that we are now at a stage beyond the boundaries of *tisis*, since revenge has already taken place. And the urge for its continuation, whether that urge springs from the suitor's kin or from Odysseus himself, lies outside the *Odyssey*'s framework and accordingly is restrained with a divinely forced oblivion. It becomes evident, then, that Zeus' recollection of a fulfilled vengeance narrative at the beginning of the poem primes for the closure of the story, perhaps not in a similar way

52. Loney 2019, 203-210, 218.

but certainly at an equivalent momentum. And the closing suggestion for amnesia sets the tone for the completion of the narrative just before this reduces itself to a prolonged vendetta, possibly in cyclic epic mode.

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II. ANIMALS AND MONSTERS

II. ΖΩΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΡΑΤΑ

Vassiliki Kondylaki

THE HOMERIC ANIMAL AS A TRIGGER OF EMOTIONS IN GODS, EPIC HEROES AND AUDIENCES ACHILLES' HORSES AND ODYSSEUS' DOG FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EMBODIED COGNITION

Introduction

The Homeric animal often becomes the object of figures of speech, which allow the poet to visualise the reactions of the epic heroes and to capture their emotions. While this interdependence between the representation of the Homeric animal and the emergence of the hero's emotion has attracted the attention of scholars in the analysis of Homeric similes,[1] it has been less explored in the rare cases where the animal is presented as a proper character having a central role in the epic action. This is the case with Achilles' immortal horses, Xanthus and Balius, and Odysseus' dog, Argus. In both cases animals have their proper names in the epics and can be considered as the main characters of relevant episodes in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, respectively.[2] Indeed, Xanthus and Balius lament Patroclus'

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1. See Heath 1992, p. 43. As Heath remarks "Over half of the similes in the *Iliad* (125/226)" have animals as their subject (*ibid.*). On Homeric similes that include animals in the *Iliad*, see Lonsdale 1990; Clarke 1995; Fagan 2001; Letoublon 2016. On Homeric similes that include animals in the *Odyssey*, see Rose 1979; Glenn 1998; Anhalt 2002. For an approach of Homeric similes from a cognitive perspective, see Minchin 2001.

2. Two of the three horses of Achilles' chariot were immortal, Xanthus and Balius; the

death, while Argus recognizes Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, after twenty years of absence and then dies.[3]

If the Homeric narrator uses animals in a simile to create images familiar to his audience so that aspects of the heroic world are better emphasized, as Paul Warthelet notes,[4] the representation of the animal as a proper character leads the narrator to emphasize the interaction between this animal and the other characters in the poem, namely, to emphasize its action on the intradiegetic level. The audience's attention is thus guided in an indirect way: the representation of the animal and the emotions attributed to it are filtered through the representation of the emotions it generates in the other characters of the epic. This is a less studied aspect, as scholars' interest has mainly focused on the role and the symbolic connotations of the animal in terms of poetics. More specifically, in the case of the lamentation of Achilles' horses, emphasis has been placed on the way in which this scene highlights the central contrast between divinity and humanity and underlines the fundamental theme of mortality;[5] a second interpretive strand concerns the way in which this scene resonates with the theme of divine gifts that Achilles received from his father, as Xanthus and Balius and the divine armor had been obtained by Peleus upon his marriage to Thetis.[6] In the case of Argus, scholarship has stressed the function

third horse, named Pedasus, was mortal and died by a spear during the duel between Patroclus and Sarpedon. Achilles' horses are not the only horses to have their proper names in the *Iliad*. Hector addresses his four horses by name at 8.185 (Xanthus, Podargus, Aethon, Lampus). For the observation that the names of Hectors' horses are drawn from other Homeric contexts, see *Il*. 23.295, *Od*. 23.246 and Kirk 1990, p. 192. We should note that Kirk is mistaken when he says that Lampus is one of the Sun's horses; at *Odyssey* 23.246, Lampus is presented as one of the horses of the dawn goddess Eos. For the names of horses in the *Iliad*, see Delebecque 1951, p. 146. Argus is the only named dog in the *Odyssey*.

3. *Il*. 17.424-458; *Od*. 17.290-327. All quotations from Homer are drawn from Allen and from Von Der Mühll. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of the *Iliad* are quoted from Lattimore and these of the *Odyssey* from Huddleston.

4. Warthelet 2012, p. 35.

5. See e.g., Schein 2016.

6. It is interesting to recall that the adjective *ἄμβροτος* ("immortal") is used to describe

of the dog as a symbol of the actual deplorable state of Odysseus' palace.[7]

Without disregarding these analyses, my aim is to examine from a cognitive perspective the lamentation of Xanthus and Balius comparatively to the death of Argus. More specifically, based on the embodiment hypothesis, the theory that aims to reevaluate the role of the body in cognitive processes (i.e., perception, memory, language, emotion),[8] I will pay particular attention to the poetic devices that highlight the interactive relationship between the bodily aspects of these animals and the emergence of emotion in audience in two ways: first directly, that is, without the mediation of the other epic characters related to the described scenes, and then, indirectly, namely through the representation of the emotion of the gods and humans involved in the action. My purpose is to demonstrate that the animal-protagonist of an episode contributes, in a more complex way than as a simile, to the crossing of boundaries, not only between humans and non-humans, but also between epic characters and audience, so that the latter are emotionally re-oriented as the narrative unfolds and are invited to immerse themselves in the world of the epic action. In the course of this paper, I shall discuss the modern notion of immersion in conjunction

both Achilles' weapons and his horses. See *Il.*17.202 (*ἄμβροτα τεύχεα*); 16.866-7 (*ἵπποι / ἄμβροτοι*). On this subject, see Heath 1992.

7. See e.g., Beck 1991; Korhonen & Ruonakoski 2017.

8. From 2010 onwards, there has been a growing interest in the application of insights from cognitive psychology to the analysis of ancient Greek texts more generally and especially of Homeric epics and ancient Greek tragedy. For instance, Douglas Cairns' work focuses on the role of metaphors in the conceptualization of emotions (see e.g., Cairns 2012, 2016). Elisabeth Minchin is particularly interested in structures and types of memory (i.e., visual memory, personal, cultural, social memory), as well as in body language and in non-verbal communication in Homeric poetry (see e.g., Minchin 2001a, 2001b, 2008, 2012). Siobhán Marie Privitera explores the expression of emotion and thought in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey* through the lens of "body-brain-world relationships" (see Privitera 2015). On approaches to ancient drama from the perspective of cognitive embodiment with a particular emphasis on the application of insights from neuroscience to provide a deeper understanding of the emotional effect of 'tragic mask' in ancient performances, see e.g., Meineck 2011, 2018. For a recent overview of the field of "Cognitive Classics", see Meineck, Short, Devereaux (eds) 2019.

with its ancient predecessor, namely the concept of *enargeia*, a correlation that has already been applied to Homeric poems.[9] The notion of immersion is defined by the cognitive linguist Marie-Laure Ryan as "the experience through which a fictional world acquires the presence of an autonomous, language-independent reality populated by live human beings",[10] whereas the concept of *enargeia* is defined by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as "the power of conveying the things [that are described] to the senses of the audience".[11] Both terms highlight the mental experience of the listener or reader as they are absorbed in a narrative to such an extent that they experience the described events as if they were real.

Achilles' horses and Odysseus' dog: the animal embodied emotion in *performance*

Among the Homeric animals that are not limited to similes,[12] horses in the *Iliad* and the dogs in the *Odyssey* share the greatest degree of affinity with humans regarding their emotional activity.[13] This is due to the close relationship they develop with their masters through their roles: the horse as man's companion in war and the dog as man's companion in hunting, or as responsible for protecting his master and his herd. Both in the case of horses and dogs, Homeric descriptions emphasize bodily sensations and

9. On the modern notion of immersion and its association with the ancient term of *enargeia* in correlation with Homeric epics, see Allan et alii, 2017; Allan 2019. On the notion of *enargeia* in ancient scholia including Homeric scholia, see Nünlist 2009.

10. Ryan 2015, p. 9.

11. Dionysius of Halicarnassus offers a detailed definition of the notion of *enargeia* in his essay on the style of the orator Lysias, see Dion. Hal. *Lys*. 7, 2.

12. See Lonsdale 1990, p. 25: "Sixty-two identifiable species of animals are included in the Homeric poems. Apart from the horse, boar, and cattle –and in the *Odyssey* dog and birds– all are restricted to the similes, without which we would have a very incomplete view of the Homeric animal world".

13. I distinguish the representation of dogs in the *Odyssey* from that in the *Iliad*, where dogs are capable of turning humans into prey. This disturbing image is beyond the scope of this paper, the purpose of which is to examine the role of the animal-protagonist in the reception of both epics.

sensorimotor elements through which the emotional activity of animals is represented as an indissociable part of their interaction with their masters.[14] According to modern scholars, the representation of bodily movements is one of the poetic features that enhance narrative immersion by activating a process of simulation of the spatio-visual elements that constitute the unfolding of the scene.[15] From this perspective, the notion of immersion relates to the ancient concept of *enargeia,* which refers to the potential of visualization, inherent in a narrative that is qualified by "clearness", "distinctness", "vividness".[16] The roots of the visual connotations of the term *energeia* must no doubt be sought in the use of the adjective *ἐναργής* in Homer. Etymologically associated with the adjective *ἀργός* ("brilliant"), *ἐναργής* is used to describe the radiance with which a god appears to men in human form or in a dream.[17] In some cases, this divine epiphany can be emotionally painful and difficult to bear, as the expression *χαλεποὶ δὲ θεοὶ φαίνεσθαι ἐναργεῖς* suggests ("gods are hard to bear in their appearance",[18] *Il.* 20.131). It is no coincidence that ancient commentators and rhetoricians draw on the Homeric use of the adjective *ἐναργής*, which associates visual effect with emotional impact, to describe the notion of *enargeia* as a property of a narrative.

I argue that the lamentation of Achilles' horses and the death of Odysseus' dog offer a unique model of the embodied mode of Homeric narrative to the extent that immersion is achieved through the representation of the animal emotion in *performance*. This performance targets the main sense

14. In the *Iliad*, horses are depicted being exposed to injuries (e.g., 23.341; 23.435), tiredness (e.g., 23.507-8) and death (e.g., 16.469), while they express their fear by "whinnying loudly" (12.51). In the *Odyssey*, dogs are praised for their physical appearance (e.g., 14.21) and are credited with the ability to discern and recognize a threat or its absence by barking (e.g., 14.29) or by wagging their tails (e.g., 16.4), respectively.

15. Allan 2022, p. 81.

16. *L.S.J.*, s.v. *ἐνάργεια*.

17. The adjective *ἐναργής* occurs four times in Homer: *Il.* 20.131; *Od.* 3.420; 4.841; 7.201; 16.161.

18. The translation is my own. The expression is used by Hera in reference to the potential fear aroused in Achilles when he meets a god face to face.

related to the effect of *enargeia,* namely the vision of the audience, who become at the same time listeners and "spectators" of the described episodes.[19]

To begin with the lamentation of Achilles' horses in book 17 of the *Iliad*: closer examination of lines 434-440 reveals that the horses' bodies play an important role in the manifestation of their suffering. Disobeying the charioteer Automedon, the horses refuse to move, they are "leaning their heads along the ground," (*οὔδει ἐνισκήμψαντε καρήατα,* 17.437), whereas "their bright manes were made dirty" (*θαλερὴ δ᾽ ἐμιαίνετο χαίτη*, 17.439). This is an image that is reminiscent of the ritual gestures of mourning heroes, including Achilles, "who took and tore at his hair with his hands, and defiled it" (*κόμην ᾗσχυνε δαΐζων*, 18.27). The stillness of the horses, while they are "standing apart from battle" (*μάχης ἀπάνευθεν*, 17.426), is so intense that the Homeric narrator compares them to a funeral "stele that remains unchanging"[20] (*στήλη μένει ἔμπεδον*, 17.434).

It is interesting to note the way in which the Homeric narrator introduces the theme of the lamentation of Achilles' horses. They weep for Patroclus because they learn of the death of their charioteer (*κλαῖον, ἐπεὶ δὴ πρῶτα πυθέσθην ἡνιόχοιο*, 17.427). The verb *πυνθάνομαι* ("to learn") indicates the acquiring of knowledge always by a human, often through another person.[21] This is the only instance in which an animal is the sub-

19. On the *enargeia* as an effect of the representation of bodily actions in Homer, see e.g., Grethlein & Huitink 2017. In ancient commentaries and rhetorical essays, the visual connotations of *enargeia* are emphasized several times by the potential of a narrative to turn its listeners into spectators. Regarding Homeric epics, a *scholion* on the beginning of the horse race in book 23 of the *Iliad* is an illuminating example. See schol. bT Il. 23.362-372: *πᾶσαν φαντασίαν ἐναργῶς προβέβληται ὡς μηδὲν ἧττον τῶν θεατῶν ἐσχηκέναι τοὺς ἀκροατάς* ("He [sc. Homer] has projected the entire mental image so graphically that the readers are captured no less than the spectators", translation cited in Nünlist 2009, p. 195). As far as the rhetorical essays are concerned, Dionysius Halicarnassus praises the style of the orator Lysias by saying that "nobody who applies his mind to the speeches of Lysias will be so obtuse, insensitive or slow-witted that he will not feel that he can see (*ὁρᾶν*) the actions which are being described going on […]."

20. The translation is my own.

21. *L.S.J.*, s.v. *πυνθάνομαι*.

ject of the verb πυνθάνομαι. When the latter is constructed with a genitive (*ἡνιόχοιο*, 17.427) accompanied by a participle (*πεσόντος*, 17.428), it means "to hear or learn concerning".[22] This linguistic feature of the passage had already attracted the interest of ancient / Byzantine commentators. Indeed, Eustathios of Thessaloniki notes that the verb πυθέσθην is used instead of ᾐσθοντο and that this is a choice that reveals the sympathy of the poet for the immortal horses (*γλυκέως*).[23] The perceptive ability that only Xanthus and Balius share with humans, as presented through the verb πυνθάνομαι, alludes to the human emotion of πόθος experienced by them a few verses later when the "weeping horses" (*μυρομένοισιν*) "long for their charioteer" (*μυρομένοισιν | ἡνιόχοιο πόθῳ*, 17.438-9). The two structures are close to one another, as the shedding of tears by horses is in both cases associated with a mental activity specific to humans (*πυθέσθην / πόθῳ*) and accompanied by the genitive *ἡνιόχοιο*. Often used in Homer in a context of mourning to signal tears and longing for a dead person, the verb *ποθέω* and its derivatives *πόθος* and *ποθή* are used four times to convey the emotion of the Achaeans in general and Achilles in particular, as they mourn Patroclus.[24] As if they were the Achaeans or Achilles himself, the two immortal horses *perform* with their animal bodies the first lament in the *Iliad* for the dead Patroclus.

Taking into consideration the strong meta-poetic connotations of the verb *πυνθάνομαι*, which is used to highlight the warriors' concern to accomplish something important so that the men of tomorrow will learn of it,[25] we can imagine how effective this lament is intended to be both for the

22. Ibid.

23. See Van Der Valk (ed.), 1971-1987, *Eustathii, Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem Pertinentes*, Vol. 4, p. 77 (v. 17.427): *τὸ δὲ 'πυθέσθην' ὡς ἐπὶ λογικῶν γλυκέως ῥηθὲν ἀντὶ τοῦ ᾐσθοντο εἴληπται*: the word '*πυθέσθην*' is chosen instead of the word '*ᾐσθοντο*' with the idea that it is said in a sweet manner for reasoning (beings)" (translation is my own).

24. See respectively, *Il.* 17.690; 23.16. 19.321, 24.6. Among all animals, only the horse can experience the emotion of *πόθος*. See also, *Il.* 11.161.

25. See, e.g., the Iliadic formula *καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι* ("so that the men of tomorrow will learn of it"). See, for instance, Hector's monologue in book 22 (*Il.* 22.305). On the theme

poet who recites and for the audience who follows his performance. In other words, if, rather than perceive by their senses the death of their charioteer, the horses learn of it, it is so that they can become a mnemonic visual device by which the poet stores in his mind this unusual image which can be also easily depicted as a picture in his listener's minds. By the vocabulary, the bodily imagery and the similes of the funeral stele, the Homeric narrator embodies what the heroic code imposes: he visually inscribes in his own memory what he wants his listeners' memory to retain, that is, the memory of Patroclus, creating a scene that no one will forget because of its "*pictureability*", to use here Elisabeth Minchin's words.[26] By the visual potential of the episode correlated with an effect of surprise resulting from the unique performance of the divine horses, the listeners are led to immerse themselves into the narrative. They are thus likely to experience the illusion of being present at the described episode: they are spatially transported to the battle over the dead Patroclus and they see in front of their eyes the horses lamenting their charioteer, while they were "standing apart from battle" (*μάχης ἀπάνευθεν*, 17.426).

Turning to the representation of Argus at lines 291-304 of book 17 in the *Odyssey*: this is the first and only appearance of Odysseus' dog in the poem. It is worth considering that the Homeric narrator introduces Argus to his listeners by first describing his physical movement when he hears the conversation between Odysseus and Eumaeus, and then by mentioning his name. Rather than saying that Argus hears Odysseus' voice, he describes the way in which the body of a dog reacts to the stimulus of a human voice. Therefore, the animal's bodily movement anticipates visually that the human voice was a familiar one, a choice that creates an expectation in the listeners until they hear the name of Argus in line 292, which starts in enjambment.

of glory and shame as an antithetical pair in correlation with the expression *ἐσσομένοισι*, see Bouvier 2002, p. 93.

26. See Minchin 2008, p. 38. The notion of "pictureability", as it is used by Elisabeth Minchin, refers to the twofold memorability, that of the poet and that of the audience.

ὣς οἱ μὲν τοιαῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγόρευον·
ἄν δὲ κύων κεφαλήν τε καὶ οὔατα κείμενος ἔσχεν,
Ἄργος, Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος, […] (*Od.* 17.290-2)

So, while they said such things to each other,
a dog lying there held up his head and ears,
steadfast Odysseus' Argos […]

trans. by Huddleston

This is a strategy that makes the animal physically present in the minds of listeners and thus invites them to enter the narrative and follow it through Argus' eyes. Indeed, based on the contrast between his past image and his present image, Argus becomes the structural factor through which the narrative is organized. Since Argus as an animal lacks a voice, the representation of his perspective is achieved solely through the representation of the way he is treated by humans. Odysseus himself "raised him" (*θρέψε* 17.293), but "he did not have any enjoyment of him" (*οὐδ' ἀπόνητο*, 17.293), as he left for Troy. While he was a dog gifted for hunting (17.294-5), he was completely neglected after Odysseus' departure (*ἀπόθεστος*, 17.296); he now lies, full of lice, on the dung heap of the animals of his master's palace (17.209-300). The repetition of the verb forms κεῖτ' (17.296, 17.300) and κείμενος (17.291) not only places the emphasis to the immobility to which the dog is now condemned in opposition to his former speed,[27] but also foreshadows his imminent death.

As if he was seeking to compensate for Argus' fate, presented so briefly to the audience, the Homeric narrator gives the dog access to νόος, a term used to indicate either the psychic entity itself or the mental activity that

27. The adjective *ἀργός* means "rapid" and "bright". In the case of hunting dogs, the notion of brightness evokes successive quick movements perceived as a kind of flash in the eyes, so that each animal appears bright or shiny, see the formula *κύνες πόδας ἀργοί*, cf. *Il.* 18.578; *Od.* 17.62; 20.145. On the name of Odysseus' dog and its association with the adjective ἀργός, see also Steiner 2010, p. 118.

derives from it, which humans and gods share.[28] Argus is the only animal that is explicitly credited with the ability of *νοεῖν*. In epic, the term *νόος*, which is often translated by "mind", refers to the capacity of recognizing, discerning and understanding, through the senses and especially through the activation of vision.[29] It also emphasizes the outcome of the act of thinking, and it is thus identified with an intention, a plan or a stratagem.[30] While the main activity of νόος is intellectual, this entity is also associated with emotions to the extent that the latter are produced after its activation or capable of affecting its proper function.[31]

If Kurt von Fritz is right when he claims that the "most primitive function of the *noos* would have been to sense danger and distinguish between friend and enemy",[32] this is perfectly applied to the case of Argus, who uses his senses to identify his master. Indeed, Argus first hears Odysseus' voice, as his physical reaction indicates (*κεφαλήν τε καὶ οὔατα κείμενος ἔσχεν*, 17.291) and then sees him while he is approaching and recognizes him (*ὡς ἐνόησεν Ὀδυσσέα ἐγγὺς ἐόντα*, 17.301). Despite his weakness, Argus makes Odysseus understand that he recognized him by wagging his tail (*ἔσηνε*, 17.302) and dropping his ears (*κάββαλεν*, 17.302). If, for lack of physical strength, he cannot approach his master (17.301-304), this does not prevent the listeners from conceiving his minimal movements as an embod-

28. There is no consensus among scholars concerning whether animals in Homer possess *noos* or not. The passage depicting Odysseus' men transforming into swine but retaining the same mind as before has been used as evidence for both positions. John Heath pays particular attention to the expression ὡς τὸ πάρος περ which "would be completely unnecessary if animals obviously had no *noos*", see *Od*. 10.240 and Heath 1992, p. 42, n. 10. On the contrary, Robert Renehan claims that "it is not a question of two (or more) different types of νοῦς, those of men and of animals; clearly the poet sees νοῦς 'mind' as something which men have and animals do not" (see Renehan 1981, p. 254). For a discussion of the use and connotations of *noos* comparatively to other mental organs in Homer, see Larock 1930; Harrison 1960; Clarke 1999, pp. 53-126. For an overview of *noos* from Homer to the Presocratics, see Sullivan 1995, pp. 14-35.

29. E.g., *Il*. 11.599; 12.143; 16.789.

30. E.g., *Il*. 14.62.

31. E.g., *Il*. 10.391; 20.133. On this subject, see also Harrison 1960, p. 73.

32. Von Fritz 1943, pp. 92-3.

iment and extension of the function of his νόος. In other words, the Homeric narrator allows his audience to perceive Odysseus' recognition by Argus as a unique *performance*, as it occurs in a human mode but without the assistance of any sign that men would need. It is worth considering that in the other four cases in which Odysseus is recognized, recognition does not depend on the activation of the function of ones' *νόος*. On the contrary, it is presented either as the result of persuasion through speech, as is the case with Telemachus, or as the result of the recognition of specific signs, as is the case with Eurycleia, Penelope and Laertes.[33] In opposition with his physical weakness, the sharpness of Argus' *νόος*, thanks to which Odysseus' recognition is accomplished, prompts the listeners to develop an empathetic attitude towards the animal-protagonist. This potential of eliciting an emotional response in the audience is one of the features that makes a narrative immersive.[34]

In this passage, just like the previously examined lamentation of Achilles' horses in the *Iliad*, the animal's emotional and mental activity is shaped by its body in its interaction with humans. This emphasis on the body as a mechanism of construction of their "inner activity" offers a model of *embodied cognition* that captures the highly *performative* value of this kind of narrative. In other words, the animal body engages the senses and the emotions of listeners who can thus register in their minds the narrative as a stream of visual images. One question arises here: why does the Homeric narrator choose to break the direct link between his listeners and his narrative in both scenes by representing respectively Zeus and Odysseus *performing* their own speeches, thus shifting the focus from the animal's per-

33. Odysseus convinces his son of his true identity by telling him that his disguise is due to the goddess Athena, (16.196-215). Eurycleia recognizes Odysseus by a scar over his knee, caused by a wild boar (19.392-3). Odysseus and Penelope share secret signs (*σήματα κεκρυμμένα*) that nobody else knows (23.109-110); among these signs, the most important is their bridal bed (23.171-232). Three signs are presented by Odysseus during his face-to-face encounter with Laertes: besides his scar, Odysseus refers to the trees and vines that his father had promised to give him as gifts (24.331-346).

34. Allan 2022, p. 82.

formance to the internal spectators of the scene? Does this choice not disturb the immersive effect of his narrative?

Zeus' pity: guiding the audience towards a self-reflexive perspective (*Il.* 17.441-458)

Thanks to the embodied nature of the emotion of the grieving horses, they can be conceived as an object of contemplation that can engender pity in Zeus, which leads him to deliver an inner speech, reported in direct style and containing a second-person apostrophe.

In this respect, lines 441 and following merit closer attention. Zeus sees (*ἰδὼν*, 17.441) and takes pity (*ἐλέησε*, 17.441) on the weeping horses (*μυρομένω*, 17.441), shakes his head (*κινήσας δὲ κάρη*, 17.442), and speaks to his *thymos* (*μυθήσατο θυμόν*, 17.442). In the *Iliad*, it is not gods but men who speak to their *thymos* in highly emotional moments. Indeed, in contexts of mourning, decision making after a dilemma, or confusion, the Homeric heroes engage in a monologue reported in direct style and marked, in most cases, by the introductory formula: *ὀχθήσας δ' ἄρα εἶπε πρὸς ὃν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν*.[35] Zeus is the only exception to this convention in the *Iliad* and, as expected, he does not speak to his *thymos* as mortals do. The introductory formula of his speech is indicative of this distinction:

> *ὀχθήσας δ' ἄρα εἶπε πρὸς ὃν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν* (*passim*, usual formula)
> *Deeply troubled, hespoke to his own great-hearted spirit*
>
> *κινήσας δὲ κάρη προτὶ ὃν μυθήσατο θυμόν* (17.442, formula reserved for Zeus in the *Iliad*)
> *and **s**tirred his head and spoke to his own spirit*
>
> trans. by Lattimore

In the first hemistich, the participle κινήσας replaces the participle *ὀχθήσας*, while instead of the verb *λέγω*, we find the verb *μυθέομαι* ("to speak"),

35. On this subject, see Pellicia 1995, Letoublon 2001. The formula *ὀχθήσας δ' ἄρα εἶπε πρὸς ὃν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν* occurs seven times in the *Iliad*: 11.403, 17.90, 18.5, 20.343, 21.53, 21.552, 22.98.

a verb used, as Richard Martin has demonstrated, to indicate an authoritative speech in a formal context and of particular interest to the audience.[36] Another surprising feature is the use of the second person, reserved for the inner speech of Zeus in the *Iliad* (*σφῶϊ*, 443, *ὑμεῖς*, 444, *ὑμῖν*, 448 *σφῶϊν*, 451, *ἔχητον* 445, *σαώσετον*, 452).[37] How could an animal be concerned with an inner speech delivered by a god ? The physical distance between Zeus-speaker and the horses-recipients as well as the impossibility of verbal communication between a god and an animal have been presented by commentators as the reasons why the poet identifies Zeus' speech as one addressed to his *thymos*.[38]

Nevertheless, I believe that Homeric diction allows Zeus' speech to his *thymos* to be set in the context of divine deliberation, especially since this deliberation concerns a crucial moment when the fate of the divine gifts is in abeyance. Performatively, this divine deliberation ends up enhancing the identification process between the audience and the Homeric characters, providing the narrative with a greater potential for empathy and thus for immersion.

While Zeus is represented in the *Iliad* in the grip of indecision[39] – alone among all the gods – he only speaks twice to his *thymos*. In addition to the

36. See Martin 1989, p. 40: "The characteristics of *muthos* speaking emerge with particular clarity when we look at the poet's use of the denominative verb *mutheomai,* 'to make a muthos'. When this word for speech occurs, the accompanying discourse has a formal nature, often religious or legal; full detail is laid out for the audience, or is expected by the interlocutor in the poem".

37. The second person is otherwise used only once in an inner speech, in the case of Poseidon in the episode of the storm in the *Odyssey* (in this case, Poseidon addresses himself, while, mentally, he is addressing Odysseus, see *Od*. 4.376-9).

38. Pellicia 1995, p. 162: "the absence of contact we hypothesize, explains why the poet identifies the speeches as spoken to the thymos"; *ibid*., p. 165: "Zeus' speech is thus doubly out of contact: not only is the speaker physically separated from the addressee, but the latter are horses, creatures without speech-competence, and thus by definition out of contact".

39. Zeus' heart (*κραδίη*) is gripped by a dilemma, when he addresses Hera, presenting the two alternatives with respect to Sarpedon's fate (see *Il*. 16.435: *διχθὰ δέ μοι κραδίη μέμονε φρεσὶν ὁρμαίνοντι*). Moreover, Zeus reflects in his *thymos* about the death of Patroclus (see *Il*. 16.646: *ἀλλὰ κατ' αὐτοὺς αἰὲν ὅρα καὶ φράζετο θυμῷ*).

scene depicting the lamentation of Achilles' horses, Zeus addresses his *thymos* also a few lines earlier in book 17, when Hector carries Achilles' weapons. The common theme of divine gifts invites a comparative study of the two passages (17.198-214 and 441-456).[40] While these two scenes present several similarities with respect to the introductory formula, the form of address, the manner of the god's intervention as well as the closing formula,[41] they differ in two main points: first, Hector is mortal, whereas Achilles' horses are immortal; second, Zeus experiences pity only in the face of the lamentation of Achilles' horses. In the first case, Zeus' intervention is justified by the fact that the hero's death is approaching; the god adjusts the divine weapons on Hector's body and gives him strength (*κράτος*, 17.206), so that he can have a few victorious moments on the battlefield as compensation for his impending death. In the second case, Zeus intervenes in a similar way, namely, he puts into the hocks and hearts of the weeping horses an ardour (μένος, 17.449) that urges them to return to battle (*ῥίμφα φέρον θοὸν ἅρμα μετὰ Τρῶας καὶ Ἀχαιούς*, 17.458). The return to war is applied by Zeus as the only remedy that can face death and suffering, as Pietro Pucci suggests.[42] If we consider that this "healing treatment",[43] to use Pucci's

40. On the theme of divine gifts in the *Iliad*, see Heath 1992.

41. In both passages, the first line of the introductory formula emphasizes Zeus' intervention as a result of the activation of his vision (*ἴδεν νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς ἰδὼν*, 17.198 – *ἰδὼν ἐλέησε Κρονίων*, 17.441). The second line of the introductory formula is almost identical (*κινήσας ῥα κάρη προτὶ ὃν μυθήσατο θυμόν*, 17.199 – *κινήσας δὲ κάρη προτὶ ὃν μυθήσατο θυμόν*, 17.442). The apostrophe is made by the interjection ἆ followed by the adjective *δειλός* (*ἆ δείλ'*, 17.201 – *ἆ δειλώ*, 17.443). Zeus' intervention is marked by the use of the first person (*μέγα κράτος ἐγγυαλίξω*, 17.206 – *οὐ γὰρ ἐάσω* 17.449, *βαλῶ μένος*, 17.451, *κῦδος ὀρέξω*, 17.453). The two closing formulas are less close linguistically, but both seal Zeus' decision of his own intervention. In the first passage, this validation is emphatically represented by Zeus' gesture of nodding with his black brows (*Ἦ, καὶ κυανέῃσιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσι νεῦσε Κρονίων*, 17.209), while in the second passage the Homeric narrator is content to represent the accomplishment of Zeus' engagement (*Ὣς εἰπὼν ἵπποισιν ἐνέπνευσεν μένος ἠΰ*, 17.456).

42. See also Pucci 2018, p. 138.

43. *Ibid*: "This healing treatment is typical of Zeus: he enhances the fighting fury of a hero as a "compensation" for the hero's subsequent death; and here he heals the horses' paralyzing sorrow of mourning by instilling more fury in their hearts. Of course, this cure

words here, makes sense in Hector's quest for the heroic ideal, it proves to be partially effective in the case of Achilles' horses. Indeed, Zeus is only able to interrupt momentarily their lamentation, since the horses will continue to mourn Patroclus' death during the funeral games in his honour in book 23.[44] Without being able to cancel the interaction of a divine being with men, Zeus is content to postpone the resulting consequence, namely the expression of grief in the face of the experience of death.

While the emotion of pity (*ἔλεος*), in principle, drives Zeus to act in such a way that the disrupted order is restored as far as possible, the same is not true in the case of the lamentation of the horses, which emphasizes the irreparable character of a divine decision.[45] From this point of view, the divine animal bearing human suffering highlights, on the one hand, the deliberative power of Zeus and on the other hand, the limits of this power. If Hector can carry the divine weapons of Achilles, however, he cannot be carried by the latter's divine horses.[46] If Zeus manages to defer the lamentation of the horses, he cannot make them forget their mourning, because he cannot reverse his own decision. By speaking to his *thymos*, Zeus definitively sets the limits of mortality, while acknowledging his own limits.

An unusual characteristic of the language of Zeus demands attention. In Homer, the interjection ἆ is always followed by the adjective *δειλὸς* in the vocative, an adjective used to highlight the misfortunes inherent in the human condition.[47] It is interesting to note that in Homer this construc-

will create more deaths and more mournings. Yet Zeus knows the senseless economy of the heroic life and he discredits it when he can or takes advantage of it when he must".

44. *Il.* 23. 283-4. See also Pucci 2018, p. 137.

45. In addition to this scene, Zeus feels pity (*ἔλεος*) three times in the poem (15.13-15; 16.431; 19.340). When he feels pity for Hector wounded on the battlefield, he asks Hera to intervene to prevent the other gods from continuing to help the Achaeans. When he takes pity on both Patroclus and Sarpedon, he turns to Hera to decide whether he should save her son, Sarpedon. When he takes pity on the old men who lament over Patroclus, he sends Athena to feed the grieving Achilles with ambrosia and nectar.

46. See Pucci 2018, pp. 37-38.

47. In Homer, there are six occurrences of the formula *δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν*: *Il.* 22.31, 22.76, 24.525, *Od.* 11.19, 12.341, 15.408).

tion is always put into the mouth of a mortal to challenge another mortal (the face-to-face of the warriors on the battlefield and the face-to-face of Achilles and Priam).[48] While the gods of the *Iliad* are likely to perceive themselves as δειλοί ("miserable"),[49] or to refer to mortals as *δειλοί*,[50] no god, except for Zeus, addresses a deity using this adjective. By engaging in an inner speech reported in direct style, a discursive practice traditionally attributed to men in Homer, Zeus here makes use of human language to address mentally a divine being and express his pity. Thus, the Homeric narrator chooses a mode and a language that belong to the communication of men to illustrate Zeus' regret for his own decision. If the boundaries between men and gods have been blurred because of the horses' involvement in human suffering, Zeus' utterance of inner speech with his second-person apostrophe to the immortal horses in a human language reflects at a narrative level this blurring of the two registers.

The alternance of the first and the second person in Zeus' speech creates a certain effect. The "I" of Zeus speaking to his *thymos* (*μυθήσατο θυμόν*, 17.442) and the "you" applied to the weeping horses (*ἆ δειλώ*,

48. More precisely, in the *Iliad*, there are five occurrences of this structure, three of which highlight the despicable state of a hero who falls on the battlefield and risks becoming prey to animals (when Odysseus kills Sokos, 11. 441 and 11.452, when Hector kills Patroclus, 16.837). The expression is put only once into Patroclus' mouth, when he realises that Eurypyleus has been wounded, he addresses the Achaeans who are condemned to fight far from their homeland and their relatives, using this adjective, see 11.816. Without presenting a direct link with the battlefield, the last instance of δειλός preceded by the interjection ἆ sets the scene for the way Achilles addresses Priam, when the latter dared to arrive near his tent to ask for Hector's body, see 24.518. It can thus be seen that the structure including the interjection ἆ and the vocative of the adjective *δειλὸς* serves to underline, in the first instance, the emotion aroused by another's mortality that the heroic code entails (11.441 and 11.816). In a second step, it dramatizes the emotion aroused by considering the risk to which this mortality is subjected in the heroic world: man is at any moment in danger of turning into an animal, of becoming prey to the enemy (11. 452; 16.837).

49. This is the case with Thetis in line 54 of book 18 of the *Iliad*: *ὤ μοι ἐγὼ δειλή, ὤ μοι δυσαριστοτόκεια.*

50. This is the case with Apollo in lines 463-4 of book 21 of the *Iliad*: *βροτῶν ἕνεκα πτολεμίξω / δειλῶν.*

17.443) break the expected narrative sequence and draws the audience's attention to the misfortune of the addressed characters rather than to the divine responsibility of the addresser. It is this misfortune that is the object of Zeus' pity. Several scholars have emphasized that his pity concerns only the immortal horses, who should not have been involved in human affairs.[51] The reason why the divine horses should have been kept away from mortals is highlighted by Zeus himself through a gnomic utterance:[52]

> *οὐ μὲν γάρ τί πού ἐστιν ὀϊζυρώτερον ἀνδρὸς*
> *πάντων, ὅσσά τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνείει τε καὶ ἕρπει.* (17.446-7)
>
> *Since among all creatures that breathe on earth and crawl on it*
> *there is not anywhere a thing more dismal than man is.*
>
> trans. by Lattimore

The adjective *ὀϊζυρός* ("lamentable", "woeful") is closely associated with human destiny.[53] In the *Iliad*, men's destiny is the war. The adjective is used to designate both the war itself (*ὀϊζυροῦ πολέμοιο*, 3.112) and the mortals who suffer from it (*ὀϊζυροῖσι βροτοῖσιν*, 13.568). Among the mortals who suffer, there is one who stands out, none other than Achilles who is characterized as "woeful above all men" in line 417 of book 1 (*ὀϊζυρὸς περὶ πάντων*). The use of the adjective *ὀϊζυρός*, which in the *Iliad* is applied only to Achilles,[54] emphasizes the misfortune of the hero as a consequence of his destiny to be outraged by Agamemnon. It thus functions as a complement to the first adjective applied to him in the same line, namely *ὠκύμορος*, which designates a person who is "doomed to a swift death"

51. E.g., Schein 2016, p. 19: "Zeus' pity, it should be emphasized, is for the weeping horses, not for Peleus or for suffering humanity in general".

52. For a general overview of the use of *gnomai* in the *Iliad*, see Lardinois 1997. Curiously, the author does not discuss this passage of book 17 of the *Iliad*.

53. For a semantic analysis of the adjective ὀϊζυρός and its cognates, see Mawet 1979, pp. 190-2.

54. In Homer, the only heroes who are characterized as *ὀϊζυροὶ* are Achilles in the *Iliad* and Odysseus in the *Odyssey* See, *Il.* 1.417; *Od.* 3.95; 4.325; 4.832; 5.105; 20.140.

(*νῦν δ' ἅμα τ' ὠκύμορος καὶ ὀϊζυρὸς περὶ πάντων*, 1.417). Considering that Achilles is the master of the divine horses after receiving them from Peleus, the use of the comparative *ὀϊζυρώτερον* in line 447 of book 17 undoubtedly reminds the listeners of Achilles' destiny, allowing them to move from their identification with Patroclus to identification with Achilles, who will learn some lines later of the death of his companion.

However, the genitive *ἀνδρός*, which serves as the complement of the comparative *ὀϊζυρώτερον*, gives rise to a further hypothesis regarding the reception of Zeus' performance of his inner speech. Humans are distinguished from all the animals as the most lamentable beings.[55] Presented as a general truth, this statement refers neither to the speaker, namely Zeus, nor to the addressed characters, namely the horses. It could thus be qualified as a "third person *gnome*", which "applies to a third person, either present or absent", a category defined by André Lardinois in his discussion of the use of *gnomai* in the *Iliad*.[56] Except for Patroclus and Achilles, I believe that anyone from Homer's audience could be considered a third person. If Zeus takes pity on the immortal horses because of the suffering they have undergone among mortals, the Homeric narrator, through such a representation of Zeus, urges his listeners to have an empathetic attitude with humans condemned to suffer because of their mortality. In other words, the function of the gnomic expression consists in reducing the distance between the listeners of the poet's performance and the heroes of the Iliadic world, so that the listeners can easily recognize themselves in Zeus' words become emotionally involved in the scene. From this perspective, the performance of Zeus' inner speech reorientates the attention of the listeners so that they experience a deeper sensation of immersion to the extent that the narrative is charged with a universal and self-reflexive po-

55. A similar formula is attested at *Od.* 18.130: *οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο πάντων, / ὅσσα τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνείει τε καὶ ἕρπει* ("The earth breeds nothing feebler than mankind, of all the things that breathe and move upon it").

56. See Lardinois 1997, p. 221. For his classification of the *gnomai*, Lardinois uses Peter Seitel's model.

tential. This potential is even extended in the image of the horses rejoining the battle while being sheltered from death. Just like the Homeric heroes, the listeners of the episode are prompted to continue to bear the burden of their own mortality.

Odysseus' hidden tears: from staging to erasing the voices of the internal audience (*Od.* 17.304-327)

After fourteen lines devoted to Argus' perspective (290-303), the Homeric narrator shifts his focus to Odysseus as an internal spectator of the scene in the present time of the narrative. It is now for Argus, in turn, to become the object of Odysseus' viewing, which brings tears to his eyes :

[…] αὐτὰρ ὁ νόσφιν ἰδὼν ἀπομόρξατο δάκρυ
ῥεῖα λαθὼν Εὔμαιον, ἄφαρ δ' ἐρεείνετο μύθῳ· (17.304-5)

[…] Then, looking away,[Odysseus] wiped away a tear,
easily evading Eumaeus' notice, and immediately asked him
trans. by Huddleston

Throughout the poem, Odysseus' tears functions as a metonym for his identity. This is precisely the reason why Odysseus, repeatedly praised for his intelligence (*μῆτις*) and his cunning (*δόλος*),[57] knows how to conceal or even restrain his tears in different contexts. Indeed, during his stay in Scheria, after listening to Demodocus' first song, he uses his cloak to hide his tears, which passed unnoticed by the Phaeacians except for Alcinous.[58] Once he has returned to Ithaca, he manages to control his emotion at his encounter with Telemachus, as he sheds tears only after revealing to his son his true identity upon Athena's order (*δάκρυον ἧκε χαμᾶζε· πάρος δ' ἔχε νωλεμὲς αἰεί*, 16.191). During his face-to-face meeting with Penelope, Odysseus shows a similar self-control when, while looking at his wife in

57. E.g., *Od.* 9.19-20; 18.51= 21.274.

58. *Od.* 8.83-85. On the gesture of veiling as a manner of displaying one's emotion, see Cairns 2009.

tears, he does not weep, on account of his cunning (*δόλῳ δ' ὅ γε δάκρυα κεῦθεν*, 19.212).[59]

Odysseus' affective reaction at the sight of Argus is close to what he experienced after listening to Demodocus' performance, as the vocabulary suggests (*ἀπομόρξατο δάκρυ*, 17.304 – *δάκρυ' ὀμορξάμενος*, 8.88). In both cases, the hero seems to be unable to restrain his tears and thus uses either a veil or his own body to wipe them away. The adverb νόσφιν ("aside") alludes to Odysseus' movement as he turns his head to one side so that his tears would escape Eumaeus' attention. One question arises here: why cannot Odysseus-beggar hold back his tears when he meets Argus, just as he does in his other two encounters with Telemachus and Penelope? I argue that Argus' mental activity presented in an embodied manner plays a key role in the comprehension of Odysseus' emotional reaction. By wagging his tail and by dropping his ears, Argus makes Odysseus understand that he has recognized him. From this perspective, these minimal bodily movements of Argus are enough to arouse tears in Odysseus. In addition, the temporal sequence of visual interaction between Argus and Odysseus invites the listeners to understand that, if Argus had not recognized Odysseus, the latter would not have been so moved by their encounter.

It is in this sense, moreover, that Plutarch understands Odysseus' emotional reaction in this passage. In his essay *On Tranquility of Mind*, he uses the Homeric passage as an example to provide a deeper understanding of the effect produced by an unexpected happening. He thus explains the hero's tears as an affective response to the unexpected sight of the sign of recognition given by Argus:

> *Εὖ δὲ καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς οἷόν ἐστι τὸ παρὰ προσδοκίαν ἐδίδαξεν· ὁ γὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς τοῦ μὲν κυνὸς σαίνοντος ἐξεδάκρυσε, τῇ δὲ γυναικὶ κλαιούσῃ παρακαθήμενος οὐδὲν ἔπαθε τοιοῦτον (τ)· ἐνταῦθα μὲν γὰρ ἀφῖκτο τῷ λογισμῷ τὸ πάθος ὑποχείριον ἔχων καὶ προκατειλημμένον, εἰς δ' ἐκεῖνον μὴ προσδοκήσας ἀλλ' ἐξαίφνης διὰ τὸ παράδοξον ἐνέπεσε.* (475a)

59. For a study of tears in Homer, see Monsacré 1984.

> *And well has the Poet taught us how strong the effect of an unexpected happening is: Odysseus, for instance, shed a tear when his dog fawned upon him, yet when he sat beside his weeping wife, he gave way to no such emotion; for into the latter situation he had come with his emotion under control and fortified by reason, but he had stumbled into the former without having expected it, and suddenly.*
>
> trans. by Helmbold[60]

It is worth noting that Odysseus' tears in response to "the unexpected" (*τὸ παρὰ προσδοκίαν*) are not related to the physical aspects of Argus indicative of his miserable state but rather to his demonstration of loyalty and devotion to his master (*τοῦ μὲν κυνὸς σαίνοντος*). In other words, as much as Odysseus did not expect to find his dog alive, so he did not expect the dog to recognize him, while Argus was so old and battered. But an unexpected emotion may prove to be an emotion difficult to manage and therefore dangerous. Resorting therefore to what he knows well, namely delivering speeches, Odysseus turns directly to Eumaeus to ask him about the identity of Argus. His speech, reported in direct style, is part of his attempt to hide his tears which would betray his identity. The Homeric narrator stresses the immediacy of Odysseus' action by placing the name of Eumaeus just before the trochaic caesura (*Εὔμαιον*), followed by the adverb *ἄφαρ* "at once", "rapidly"(*ῥεῖα λαθὼν Εὔμαιον, || ἄφαρ δ' ἐρεείνετο μύθῳ·*, 17.305). Odysseus seems to be in a hurry to get out of the emotion experienced at the sight of Argus. He thus begins *performing*, once again, by using the words as an act of cunning. Indeed, by asking whether Argus is a hunting or a table dog (17.306-310), in other words, by asking what Eumaeus would expect a stranger to ask about a dog in this situation, Odysseus aims to confirm that his own identity is still well hidden.

In this light, we are dealing here with a turning point in the narrative that is marked by a formulaic verse that constitutes an apostrophe

60. The text is quoted from the following edition: Plutarch, *Moralia*, Volume VI, Harvard University Press (The Loeb Classical Library).

of the extradiegetic narrator to the character of Eumaeus. The poet uses this same formula with two variants fifteen times in the *Odyssey*, addressing the swineherd directly and introducing each of his speeches (*τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφης, Εὔμαιε συβῶτα*).[61] Scholarship has long debated the question of its function. Some commentators have considered it as a procedure purely born of the metrical constraints of the dactylic hexameter, while other scholars have detected in it an attempt by the poet to show sympathy for the faithful swineherd, which reinforces the *pathos* of this character's utterances, all of which are indirectly or directly related to Odysseus.[62]

An attempt to reconcile these two apparently different interpretations would be to infer that the poet's sympathy was primarily motivated by the fact that Eumaeus is the first character in the poem destined as a listener to experience Odysseus' false stories,[63] while the audience knows that Odysseus lies on these occasions. This hypothesis is legitimate if we consider that the first six occurrences of the formula are all applied to the conversations between Eumaeus and Odysseus in books 14-15.[64] Its use is then

61. For the principal formula, *τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφης, Εὔμαιε συβῶτα* ("Swineherd Eumaeus you said to him in reply") see *Od*. 14.55, 14.165, 14.360, 14.442, 14.507, 16.60, 16.135, 16.464, 17.272, 17.311, 17.380, 17.512, 17.579. At *Od*. 15.325, we find the first variant: *τὸν δὲ μέγ' ὀχθήσας προσέφης, Εὔμαιε συβῶτα* ("Greatly troubled, you said to him, swineherd Eumaeus"). The second variant occurs at *Od*. 22.194, after Odysseus has revealed his identity to Eumaeus: *τὸν δ' ἐπικερτομέων προσέφης, Εὔμαιε συβῶτα* ("Swineherd Eumaeus, you said to him in mockery").

62. See e.g., De Jong 2001, p. 345: "Scholars are divided as to whether the apostrophe is merely a technical device to accommodate names with a difficult metrical shape or is a narratively significant device designed to focus on or sympathize with characters. The apostrophes of Eumaeus always form part of speech introductions and it would be forced to claim a special effect in all cases. Taken together, however, these passages do reveal the sympathy of the narrator for this gentle character. Only the narrator, Odysseus, Telemachus, and Penelope address the swineherd by name; the Suitors refer to him as 'swineherd'."

63. Eumaeus not only exchanges conversations with Odysseus-beggar several times in books 14-17, but he also becomes his most loyal ally in his plans while remaining ignorant of his identity until the episode of the killing of the suitors in book 22.

64. See *Od*. 14.55, 14.165, 14.360, 14.442, 14.507, 15.325.

extended as it serves to introduce Eumaeus' answer not only to Odysseus, but also to other heroes, such as Telemachus, Antinous and Penelope, who are ignorant of Odysseus' identity, except for Telemachus at *Od*. 16.464. The last apostrophe to Eumaeus at *Od*. 22.194 is differentiated from the previous ones both thematically and narratologically. First, it occurs in the episode of the killing of the suitors after Odysseus has revealed his identity to Eumaeus; second, it occurs not just after the direct speech of another character, as in the previous cases, but as part of a larger description of the scene by the voice of the Homeric narrator.[65] We can therefore deduce that, in addition to the generally positive image of the hero depicted as a faithful servant, the different degree of knowledge between Eumaeus and the audience may have been the initial reason that triggered a special sympathy on the part of the Homeric narrator for the swineherd. In this light, from an emotional *technique* alluding to the poet's sympathy for his character, the apostrophe ends up serving also as a metrical device capable of facilitating epic composition.[66]

Whatever the poet's original intention may have been, the apostrophe can function only as a *metalepsis*, which builds a potential for emotion.[67] The Homeric narrator pretends to enter the universe of the diegesis and thus leads his audience, through an effect of both surprise and dramatization, to experience the illusion of participating in the action evoked. It is in this illusion that the immersive quality of the "metaleptic apostrophe" lies, as it is described by Rutger Allan.[68]

65. See *Od*. 22.178-194. Odysseus' direct speech is presented in lines 171-177, several lines before the occurrence of the apostrophe at *Od*. 22.194.

66. In this regard, I disagree with Scott Richardson when he remarks that "the apostrophes to Eumaios clearly lack emotional content" and that "the sympathy for the apostrophized characters in Homer comes not from the attitude expressed by the narrator", see Richardson 1990, pp. 171 and 173.

67. On the *metalepsis*, cf. Genette 1972, p. 244. While an emotional intention on the part of the Homeric narrator for Eumaeus is rejected by Scott Richardson, the emotional effect of the apostrophe is accepted as an effect related to "the intimacy effected by the metalepsis" (Richardson 1990, p. 173).

68. See Allan 2022, p. 84: "The key aspect of Homeric metaleptic apostrophe that

I believe that, in the Argus episode, the experience of immersion takes on a special meaning that is absent from the other passages in the *Odyssey* where the apostrophe to Eumaeus occurs. Once transported into the narrative, the listeners of the scene hear Eumaeus evoking again the current deplorable state of the dog in correlation with Odysseus' absence, which is repeated in order to add dramatic irony to the passage (*τῆλε θανόντος* 17.312; *κατέλειπεν Ὀδυσσεύς*, 17.314; *ἄναξ δέ οἱ ἄλλοθι πάτρης / ὤλετο,* 17.318-319).[69] Argus thus becomes a means whereby the poet can criticize implicitly the behaviour of the suitors and to manipulate his audience into identifying with Odysseus at a critical moment in the action, namely his first entrance into his palace where his vengeance will be fulfilled.[70] However, the fate of Argus is still pending. It is up to the Homeric narrator to evoke the death of Argus, which takes place after the entry of the swineherd into the palace. At a turning point, when the audience is more immersed than ever into the narrative, they are finally learning what they have been prepared for. While one might think that this change of narrative voices produces an effect of distance at a critical moment of the action, it contributes, on the contrary, to the strengthening of the emotion of the scene. Indeed, when the Homeric narrator says that Argus dies without the knowledge of Eumaeus and Odysseus, he makes the listeners the only witnesses to the dog's death. Listeners are thus led to empathize with Argus in the same way as Eumaeus would have, had he been present. From this perspective, the extradiegetic voice of the Homeric narrator in lines 17.324-327 can be perceived as extending the effect of the apostrophe to Eumaeus in line 17.311. The Homeric narrator introduces himself into the diegetic universe, first, to elicit empathy in his audience; then he makes his internal audience disappear to generate a direct link between his external audience

makes it immersive lies in the fact that the addressed fictional character acquires, up to a point, the presence of a real live human being with whom one can interact as we do with our fellow beings in real life".

69. See De Jong 2001, p. 422.

70. Odysseus enters his palace for the first time at *Od.* 17.336.

and the animal-protagonist, which again becomes the subject of the action. It is not Odysseus, but we, as listeners of this scene, who must learn of the dog's death, while following the dog's gaze (*ἰδόντ' Ὀδυσῆα*, 17.327). This allows us again to contemplate the action through the perspective of Argus and thus be able to sympathize with Odysseus, when he takes revenge on those who left his faithful dog to die in such a despicable state.

To summarize, Argus' body gives rise to Odysseus' emotion, which functions as a structuring factor that re-organizes the whole episode. The action of Argus and the re-action of Odysseus allow the narrative voices to be multiplied. Unlike Achilles' horses, who, thanks to Zeus' intervention, will rejoin the battle and who will be honored again by the poet,[71] for Argus the narrative stops here. But if Argus must die alone *like* a hero,[72] it is so that the listeners may assume the role of preserving his *kleos*. What could be more immersive for them than experiencing the illusion of being the sole eyewitness to the death of Odysseys' dog?

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71. See *Il.* 19.400-424; 23.276-8; 283-4.

72. See Steiner 2010, p. 121: "The terms used for the death of Argus resemble the formula that describes the death of several Iliadic warriors (*ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή*, *Il.* 5.83; 16.334; 20.477) lending further nobility and Heroic status to the figure".

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THE ANIMALS THAT HOMER'S HEROES THEREFORE ARE: POETRY AS SACRIFICE

1. Introduction

1.1 The idea of a hierarchy of nature and of an existential divide between humans and animals marks longstanding traditions of thought that reach back to classical antiquity.[1] As reported, for example, already of Alcmaeon of Croton (DK 1a, in Theophr. *De Sens.* 25f, D. 506):[2]

> *Ἀ. μὲν πρῶτον ἀφορίζει τὴν πρὸς τὰ ζῶια διαφοράν. ἄνθρωπον γάρ μέν, οὐ ξυνίησι δέ τὰ δ' ἄλλα αἰσθάνεται μέν, οὐ ξυνίησι δέ.*
>
> *[. . .] Alcmaeon begins by determining the difference with regard to animals. For he says that a human being differs from the others because he*

1. Bibliographies are large and diverse. Hierarchy and taxonomy: Zatta 2022; Padial and De la Riva 2021; Zatta 2017; Nee 2005; Maynard Smith and Szathmáry 1995 Clutton-Brock 1995; Granger 1984; Preus 1979; Lovejoy 1936 is seminal, reconsidered in Mahoney 1987. Influential recent work in animal studies (esp. philosophy, critical thought, etc.): Agamben 2003 (and Agamben's large *Homo Sacer* project, collected in Agamben 2017); Braidotti and Hlavajova 2018; Calarco 2008; Demello 2012; Derrida 2008 (whose title is adapted for the title of my essay); Foucault 1973; Harraway 2008; Kalof 2007b; Kalof and Fitzgerald 2007; Leach 2000; Mcinnerney 2010; Shapiro and Demello 2010; Singer 1975; Taylor and Signal 2011; Taylor and Twine 2014; Baker 2000; Berger 1980; Burt 2002; Manning and Serpell 1994; Thomas 1983; etc. Specialized journals and bibliographies in http://www.animalstudies.msu.edu/bibliography.php). Animals in antiquity: Bodson 1983; Campbell 2014; Gilhus 2006; Holmes 2014; Kalof 2007a; Kalof 2007b; Keller 1963; Kindt 2017; Kitchell 2014; Llewellyn-Jones and Lewis 2018; Lonsdale 1979; Newmyer 2011; Osborne 2007; Payne 2010; Sorabji 1993; Taylor 2009; Thompson 1936, 1947; Timofova 2018; Anderson 1985; Brewer, Clark *et al.* 2001; Willekes 2016; Korhonen and Ruonakoski 2017; etc.

2. Diels and Kranz 1952, vol. 1; trans. Laks and Most; see Dörrie 1970; Laks 2018; bibliography in Huffmann 2021 (https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/alcmaeon/, accessed Sept. 6, 2021).

is the only one that understands, while the others perceive but do not understand,

It is, of course, Aristotle who has canonized such distinctions in what was later known as the *scala naturae* and "the great chain of being".[3] In his many works, he sets out the teleological relations of superior and inferior organisms that ultimately structure the order of nature and life, from plants, through animals, to Man. As he says in the *Politics* (1256b.15-22), for example:[4]

δῆλον ὅτι καὶ γενομένοις οἰη τέον τά τε φυτὰ τῶν ζῴων ἕνεκεν εἶναι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ζῷα τῶν ἀνθρώπων χάριν, τὰ μὲν ἥμερα καὶ διὰ τὴν χρῆσιν καὶ διὰ τὴν τροφήν, τῶν δ' ἀγρίων, εἰ μὴ πάντα, ἀλλὰ τά γε πλεῖστα τῆς τροφῆς καὶ ἄλλης βοηθείας ἕνεκεν, ἵνα καὶ ἐσθὴς καὶ ἄλλα ὄργανα γίνηται ἐξ αὐτῶν.

…clearly, we must suppose that plants exist for the sake of animals and the other animals for the good of man, the domestic species both for his service and for his food, and if not all, at all events most of the wild animals for the sake of his food and of his supplies of other kinds, in order that they may furnish him both with clothing and with other appliances.

Such views are widely attested facts of history, of natural philosophy, theology and social practice, but they are not facts of nature.[5] Indeed, already in antiquity the idea of a categorical divide between humans and animals

3. Above, n. 1.

4. Trans. Rackham. Aristotle's biology provided the infrastructure for his views of politics/social order, the teleological harmony of complementing opposites, of master and slave (*διὸ δεσπότῃ καὶ δούλῳ ταὐτὸ συμφέρει*, 1252a.34), etc. See recently, Bos 2009; Depew 2019; Glock 2019; Meyer 2020; Karbowski 2019; Karbowski 2012; Bloch 2006. Important work in Lloyd 1961; Lloyd 2013 Pellegrin 1986; Kosman 1987; etc. Against reductive historical traditions, Timofova 2018; Brill 2019 and other recent work suggest greater complexity within Aristotle's view.

5. See, famously, Kuhn 1962; Brackenridge 1985; also, e.g., Latour 1999; Daston 2021.

was challenged. Sextus Empiricus, for example, reports of Chrysippus (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.69-71):[6]

> *κατὰ δὲ τὸν Χρύσιππον τὸν μάλιστα συμπολεμοῦντα τοῖς ἀλόγοις ζῴοις καὶ τῆς ἀοιδίμου διαλεκτικῆς μετέχει. φησὶ γοῦν αὐτὸν ὁ προειρημένος ἀνὴρ ἐπιβάλλειν τῷ πέμπτῳ διὰ πλειόνων ἀναποδείκτῳ, ὅταν ἐπὶ τρίοδον ἐλθὼν καὶ τὰς δύο ὁδοὺς ἰχνεύσας δι' ὧν οὐ διῆλθε τὸ θηρίον, τὴν τρίτην μηδ' ἰχνεύσας εὐθέως ὁρμήσῃ δι' αὐτῆς. δυνάμει γὰρ τοῦτο αὐτὸν λογίζεσθαί φησιν ὁ ἀρχαῖος "ἤτοι τῇδε ἢ τῇδε ἢ τῇδε διῆλθε τὸ θηρίον· οὔτε δὲ τῇδε οὔτε τῇδε· τῇδε ἄρα.*
>
> *…according to Chrysippus, who shows special interest in irrational animals, the dog even shares in the far-famed 'Dialectic'. This person, at any rate, declares that the dog makes use of the fifth complex indemonstrable syllogism when, on arriving at a spot where three ways meet, after smelling at the two roads by which the quarry did not pass, he rushes off at once by the third without stopping to smell. For, says the old writer, the dog implicitly reasons thus: "The creature went either by this road, or by that, or by the other: but it did not go by this road or by that: therefore it went by the other.*

Much contemporary work has likewise exposed a far more complex and dynamic relationship between living beings.[7]

6. See Ju 2007, Newmyer 2006, 2011, 2014; Osborne 2007; Payne 2010; Sorabji 1993; Taylor 2009; etc.. Similarly, Pythagoreans, some Stoics, Plutarch, Neoplatonists, etc. Porphyry (*On Abstinence from Killing Animals* 3.6.5): "It is reported that even some voiceless animals readily respond to their masters, more so than a human friend would. A lamprey which belonged to the Roman Crassus would come to him when called … So the impression is the same as in one who speaks, whether or not it reaches the tongue. How then can it not be ignorant to call only human language logos, because we understand it, and dismiss the language of other animals? … But surely it is absurd to judge rationality or non-rationality by whether speech is or is not easy to understand, or by silence or voice. That way one would also say that the god who is above all, and the other gods, lack logos because they do not speak". Trans. Murray 2014.

7. Above, n. 1.

1.2 In this essay, following the intuitions of such work, I want to suggest that already at the earliest point in the tradition of Western literature and thought, in Homer's verse, existential boundaries can be seen as fundamentally more permeable and complex than hierarchical traditions allow.[8] There are, of course, in Homer, many points of difference between living beings, between heroes, dogs, birds, wild beasts, cattle, etc., and many instances where heroes, dogs, birds and other living beings are compared.[9] But, *pace* common assumptions and anachronistic projections, both such differences and points of overlap, cannot be contained within a categorical system. This idea has substantial implications for the way we read and understand Homer.

1.3 Beyond this Introduction (Section 1), the discussion comprises two main parts. One (Sections 2 and 3) reconsiders taxonomical frames and the division between animals and humans. The other (Sections 4 and 5) explores some important interpretive implications of such reconsideration.

Section 2 sets out some methodological considerations, separating categorical abstraction from entangled usage. In Section 3, I offer some of the evidence for a non-categorical approach to Homer. The examples I offer are not a complete or systematic account of Homeric living beings, first because of obvious limitations of space, but more importantly because Homer's text and language resist such orderly and complete categorical accounts. The slippage between usage and abstraction is often implicitly elided or glossed over in some scholarship. It may seem to reflect the imperfect

8. Notwithstanding fundamental philosophical and scientific principles and intuitions (see, e.g., in Kahane 2018a, 2018b, 2021, 2022 (forthcoming), 2022, I have here tried to focus the discussion to Homer. Forthcoming work on animals by Kahane considers more general philosophical arguments.

9. Körner 1930 (a list, animal by animal); Voultsiadou and Tatolas 2005 (zoological, but notes [1875]: "the knowledge of Homeric man about animals, as reflected in the epics, seems to concentrate mainly, but not exclusively, on animals involved in human activities"); Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981; Lonsdale 1990; Redfield 1994; Hawtree 2014 (very weak, but some useful references); Heath 2005; Ready 2011; Rankine 2017; also sections within broader studies (n. 1, above).

nature of ordinary parlance, or of our observations, or of the ontological difference between sign and reality, etc. Yet there are fundamental points of history and ultimately metaphysics to consider. Homer is not an Aristotle or a Linnaeus. In the absence of explicit systematic taxonomic reflections and of a teleological hierarchy in Homer, we must allow for more complex, less predictable, entangled orders of being and relations between "animals" and "humans".[10] Such complex orders, we must stress, should not simply be boxed-in as early "pre-rational" historical thought. Indeed, in some ways such complexity resonates better with contemporary scientific and critical approaches than with Aristotelian, classical or even early modern traditions of classification and viewing of the world.[11]

Reading Homer against the grain of taxonomic hierarchy is a matter well beyond the technicalities of classification. It impacts our understanding of Homeric poetry as a whole. In Sections 4 and 5, I consider some implications, looking at questions of mortality, death and especially of sacrificial killing in Homer.

Section 4 explores the evidence and defines the problem. Broadly speaking, sacrifice, indeed, "animal sacrifice", is often seen as an institutionalized response to primordial violence, anxiety and guilt over acts of killing - an expiatory mediation, between life and death.[12] Yet, as scholars point out, Homeric *hecatombs* and *hiera* offer weak evidence of such powerful underlying cognition. The sacrificial killing of animals in Homer is a "predictable, peacefully ordered" ritual prelude to the joys of mortal feast-

10. These terms are heavily inflected by anachronistic projections (e.g., Renaissance "humanism" - Petrarch, Poggio Bracciolini, Niccolò Niccoli, etc., for which see Kristeller 1978). Where possible, I've used periphrases and specific denominations.

11. Pre-rational thought: see discussion and n. 28, below. Contemporary arguments, below, also references in n. 1, above.

12. See references in n. 55. My discussion below takes into account esp. Burkert 1984 influenced by Meuli 1946; Seaford 1994; Hitch and Rutherford 2017; Bremmer 2007. At issue is not the precise nature of sacrifice, which is a vast and highly disputed topic, but, assuming its broad function as a representation of violence, guilt and anxiety, the place of sacrifice in Homer.

ing.[13] The gods are left with bones, fat and smoke.[14] In contrast to such descriptions, Homer's ritualized portrayal of the killing and death of heroes is far more explicit, destructive and charged. Such carefully organized depiction of violence is the very substance of Homeric epic, of *μῆνις* (*Il.* 1.1), we might say, deeper, perhaps, than any narrative plot. As I argue in Section 5, a more fluid and complex order of being, one that does not categorize the boundary between humans and animals, allows us to read Homer's ritual narrative of heroic killing and death and, indeed, to read Homer's highly ritualized formulaic poetry itself, not only as "imperishable fame", as a record of the past, but also as a ritual speech-act, a performative offering of heroes' lives, that, like any sacrificial ritual, engages with the existential/ethical predicament of survival and death. Homeric verse thus becomes discursive sacrifice enacted in the present, every time the poems are sung or read.

2. A Methodological Comment

2.1 On the face of it, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* seem to describe a world of conventional human and animal hierarchies. It is a world of immortal anthropomorphic divinities and lesser theomorphic mortal humanity. Within this order, animals play distinct, supplemental subject roles. They are hunted, farmed, consumed as food and sacrificed.[15] Their behaviour in the wild and in domestic environments is invoked by the poet and his speakers to illustrate human behaviour.[16] Animals in Homer often kill or are killed.

13. Seaford 1989: 87.

14. Ekroth 2014: 325: "The main kind of sacrifice was alimentary, where only a small part of the animal was destroyed, usually by burning it, and the rest was available for consumption and use by the human participants".

15. Lists in Körner 1930; Overview in Heath 2011. Hunting – in similes and character narratives: Lonsdale 1990; Sale and Felson-Rubin 1983; Vidal-Naquet 1986: 1-38; Farming/animal husbandry: Mcinnerney 2010; Meat cultures: Mcinnerney 2014b; Sacrifice: in Burkert 1984; Meuli 1946; Seaford 1994; Hitch and Rutherford 2017; bremmer 2007; Naiden and Faraone 2012; Stocking 2017; Kirk 1980; Vidal-Naquet 1970.

16. See, e.g., Ready 2011. Similes assume overlap of tenor and vehicle; Jacobson 1999 on Melanthius and Odysseus suggests further affinity.

They are for the most part denied the faculty of speech, which many ancients and moderns have viewed as a determinant of rationality and thus as the benchmark of what is "human", in contrast to what is "other", including, at times, not only animals, but also women and slaves.[17]

Scholars of many different persuasions have nevertheless often pointed out that in Homer there are many prominent instances in which the boundaries between humans and animals are crossed or blurred.[18] Animals behaviour is described in human terms, and vice versa. Achilleus' horses are endowed by Hera with speech (*Il.* 19.397-418).[19] Perhaps more to the point and more ordinarily, Polyphemus speaks to his ram (*Od.* 9.447-60).[20]Animals in Homer routinely exhibit will and agency, emotion, memory, thought and complex social behaviour. Achilles' horses lament the death of Patroklos (*Il.* 17.426-28). Argos the dog recognizes the return of his master (*Od.* 17.326-7).[21] In *Iliad* 2.303-30, Odysseus describes the sign, seen by the Greek host at Aulis, of the serpent devouring the sparrows and her eight fledglings. "The references to her [the sparrow's] wailing for her children (315 *ὀδυρομένη φίλα τέκνα*) and to her children as (311) *νήπια τέκνα*", notes Seaford, "have a human connotation".[22] The sign of the serpent and the sparrow and its emotions, of course, have broad res-

17. Animal sound (*φωνή*) vs. human speech (*λόγος*) is a basic distinction in Aristotle (*De Anim.* 420B -421, etc.) which has inspired long traditions of debate Labarrière 1984, but cf., e.g., Harrison 1998), also in modern philosophy (Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida, Agamben, etc.).

18. See, e.g., Lonsdale 1990; Ready 2011; etc.. Cf. also n. 7, above.

19. Cf. other addresses to horses: 8.185-97, by Hector; 23.402-17, by Antilochos. Heath 2005: 40 suggests: "Xanthus is no Mr. Ed.", but misinterprets Chrysippus (Galen *SVF* II.144): "the white-armed goddess Hera made him [Xanthus] speak (*audêenta*)" – not because he had no voice before (*aphônon*), or because he did not possess the voice common to horses (*phônen*), but because that is not called *audê*". Trans. Clay. Animals have language, as the ancients knew well.

20. Heath 2005: 82 dismisses the addresses as "quaint" "folk-tale" material. But Homer's heroes speak to animals regularly - to horses, above (also Porphyry, n. 5, above) as do men, women and children in real life to this day. See Sorabji 1993.

21. Further discussion, below.

22. Seaford 1989: 88, who notes: "The 'sign' resembles what it signifies".

onance. They not only resembles human behaviour but also, as Kalchas himself explains, characterizes the course of events in the War, the course of epic narrative and (since Homer is "the teacher of the Greeks"[23]) also the ethical and cultural beginnings of the traditions of the West.

2.2 Examples of overlap, though frequent and expansive, are nevertheless often viewed in terms of an otherwise orderly hierarchy of existence and the relations between humans and animals.[24] Exceptionality and points of contact between what are otherwise assumed to be distinct existential domains are mapped out in terms of poetics and religion, of orality and the pre-rational, pre-scientific, experiential character of early Greek thought, or the closeness of oral cultures to nature. Yet the categorical boundaries, for example between orality and literacy, between "primitive" and "advanced" thought, between "myth", "poetics", "reason" and "science", between language use and abstract language categories and, of course, between many "classical" dichotomies such as masters and subjects, men and women, free men and slaves, have been challenged and debunked time and time again in seminal empirical and theoretical scientific, philosophical, linguistic and historical discussions.[25] As, indeed, categorical

23. Plato, *Rep*. 606.e.2: *τὴν Ἑλλάδα πεπαίδευκεν*.

24. E.g., Heath 2005, on humans, animals and speech. Cf. nn. 19, 20.

25. See, e.g., Lloyd 1966: 3: "In a series of works beginning with *Les Fonctions mentales dans les societes inferieures* (1910)1 Levy-Bruhl developed the hypothesis of a ' pre-logical' mentality, a mentality which is ignorant of the law of contradiction and which is 'utterly mystical' … this hypothesis had a profound influence on at least one generation of historians of early Greek philosophy". Lloyd stresses (1966: 4): "Already in 1912 Durkheim contested the postulate of a 'pre-logical' mentality: 'Thus, between the logic of religious thought and the logic of scientific thought, there is no abyss. Both are made of the same essential elements, but equally and differently developed. What seems mainly to characterize the first, is a natural taste as well for the wild confusions as for the striking contrasts ... It does not know the measure and the nuances, it seeks the extremes; it employs, consequently, logical mechanisms with a sort of awkwardness, but it does not ignore any of them')". Similarly, Lèvi-Strauss' 1969 (1964), 1961 (1955) critique of "primitive" and "advanced" cultures and the critique (Finnegan 1980; Biakolo 1999; etc.) of Ong 1982's reductive oral/literate (primitive/developed) cognitive divides. Recent "posthuman" perspectives and the critique of conceptual and terminological dichotomies are particularly important – see Braidotti

boundaries between the human and the animal have been challenged.[26]

2.3 We must stress that the perspective we propose to adopt in no way disputes the differences between beings, behaviour, thought, words and things that abound in every context in Homeric verse. Serpents are not sparrows.[27] Men are not dogs.[28] Women are not doves or long winged thrushes.[29] Heroes perform hecatombs and *hiera* but bulls and sheep do not sacrifice men or women to the gods. In many contexts, it is practically convenient to resort to fixed wholesale terminological and conceptual divisions. Yet the text itself resists totality and suggests substantive overlaps. Indeed, in terms of underlying cognition and thought, in terms of both ontology and language, in terms of fundamental critical method, we should allow for greater complexity and more dynamic states of difference in the relations between living beings in Homer. Such relations are not a set of universal, abstract existential categories –with or without exceptions and intermediary states– but instead, are best conceptualized in contingent, situational, context-specific and flexible terms, as dynamic interactive patterns.[30] Where situations change, relations too can change. We are dealing,

and Hlavajova 2018; in classics, Chesi and Spiegel 2019; The Postclassicist Collective 2020; Bianchi, Brill *et al.* 2019.

26. References in n. 6, above. Also Akkerhuis 2016; Nee 2005; Maynard Smith and Szathmáry 1995 Clutton-Brock 1995.

27. *Il.* 2.303-30. Heath 1999.

28. *Il.* 8.338-342; 10.183-189; 10.360-364; etc. Lonsdale 1990.

29. *Od.* 22.465-72. Fulkerson 2002.

30. For the linguistic foundations of this approach, see work in construction grammar (cognitive-functional grammar), e.g., Goldberg 2006; Tomasello 2003 (stressing the epiphenomenal nature of grammatical rules). Goldberg, e.g., Goldberg 2019 etc., argues that all levels of text, and indeed, beyond, all patterns of behaviour qualify as constructions, thus elevating the principle to an existential argument. Discussions in the natural science and philosophy are extensive and complex - I largely avoid them here, but, see, e.g., Nicolis and Prigogine 1989 (complexity, esp. in thermodynamics); Prigogine and Stengers 1984 (overview); Lorenz 1972 (meteorology, the "butterfly and tsunami" argument); Barad 2007 (quantum mechanics and philosophical implications); application to Homer (repetition, diction, emotions, intertextuality, etc.): Kahane 2018b, Kahane 2018a, Kahane 2019, Kahane 2021.

not with a fixed categorical system, but with tangential points of interaction, contact and contrast.

Let us rephrase and stress this idea: Many scholars agree that the evidence in Homer's verse attests to exceptions, contradictions and irregularities. *De facto,* such instances do not fully map onto categorical dichotomies between humans, or between humans and gods on the one hand and animals on the other. Like humans, animals have thought, they express emotions, they care for their young, they suffer.[31] Such examples of animal behaviour in Homeric verse are better viewed, not as occasional lapses or anomalies within the system nor as instances of pre-rational thought, but as characteristics of the system "itself". The system contains many patterns and intermediary states but such patterns are epiphenomenal. "Homer's reality" is inherently complex, interactive and emergent rather than governed by invariable abstractions.[32]

3. Homer's Animals

3.1 What in Homer is an animal? Epic language itself resists a categorical distinction. "There is no general term for animals" in Homer.[33] Indeed, the noun *ζῷον*, "living being", otherwise "animal", only first appears in later works.[34] And even such later usage does not always separate humans from other living beings and it sometimes even unites all living beings in their mortality.[35] The preliminary point here is simply that the categorical notion of an "animal" – even if we put aside general arguments, ancient and

31. Famously, Jeremy Bentham' (1789 = 1970: 282–83n; cf. Derrida 2008: 27): "The question is not, Can they ['animals'] reason?, nor Can they ['animals'] talk? but, Can they ['animals'] suffer?"

32. See above, n. 30.

33. Heath 2005: 42 and n. 12; Lonsdale 1979: 56.

34. West 1966: 329 on *Th.* 584 (*ζωοῖσιν ἐοικότα*): "Rzach prints *ζῴοισι*, but the parallels show that this is wrong; the word *ζῴιον* does not in fact occur before Sem. fr. 11 [13 W], and there uncontracted". For later usage, see Hdt. 5.10; 5th. c., etc. – cf. Lonsdale, *ibid.*.

35. Pl. *Tim.*77b.2 *πᾶν γὰρ οὖν ὅτιπερ ἂν μετάσχῃ τοῦ ζῆν, ζῷον μὲν ἂν ἐν δίκῃ λέγοιτο ὀρθότατα·* ("For everything, in fact, which partakes of life may justly and with perfect truth be termed a living creature." trans. Bury. Aristotle's scientific world offers paradigmatic

contemporary – may, in fact, be a misleading anachronistic projection when considering the specific question of existential or linguistic boundaries in Homer and must thus be approached with caution. To speak of *ζῷα* in Homer may be convenient, perhaps even permissible in some general discussions. It helps us sidestep some of the complexity of Homer's language and thought. Yet it is precisely such complexity that is at issue here.[36] Scholarly and scientific responsibility requires a more fragmented view and, at times, some cumbersome periphrases (some of which I use below) in lieu of clear-cut terms. Such practice that allows us to remain better attuned to the details of Homer's verse.

3.2 Homer names many types of different living beings, of course.[37] We find, for example, beings with wings, *πετεηνά*, flying beings, *οἰωνοί, ὄρνεα, ὄρνιθες*.[38] These are sometimes described in similes and are sometimes observed, often as omens. Οἰωνοί, especially in the *Iliad*, are presented – though never actually so described – as scavengers that feast on the flesh of heroes' corpses. Homer likewise describes *ἰχθύες*, swimming beings that inhabit the sea.[39] On one occasion (*Il.* 21.127), such beings, "fish", also eat the flesh of dead heroes (as in later traditions, "swimming with the fishes"). We find *μῆλα, βόες, αἶγες,* and *σύες*, four-legged beings mostly reared in domestic habitats though at other times living in the wild.[40] Such beings – I am here using specific nouns and circumlocutions to avoid the foreclosure of the term "animals" - usually exist to be killed. Some are used as food (dogs excepted), some – though not all – also used as sacrificial offerings

divisions, *ζῷα* are animals, but cf. e.g., *πολιτικὸν ζῷον* (*Pol.* 1253a.3) of man (*ἄνθρωπος*), pointing to some commonality even in Aristotle. See Depew 1995.

36. We can no more internalize such projections than we can accept, for example, Aristotle's view of "natural" male/female, master/subject free/slave roles – which present substantive scientific, ethical and political difficulties..

37. General comments in Körner 1930; Keller 1963; Voultsiadou and Tatolas 2005; Lexical mapping and references to individual terms in LfgrE, *s.voc.*.

38. Rood 2006; Levaniouk 2007; Johansson 2012; Collins 2002.

39. Berdowski 2008; Sluiter 2014; earlier work in Combellack 1952 and Scott 1936.

40. See, esp. Mcinnerney 2010.

to the gods. Beyond Homer's domestic environments, we find θηρά (the nom. pl. is not actually attested), lions, panthers, wolves and jackals, four legged carnivorous beings that live in the wild, also wild-boar and deer, for example, beings that are hunted and killed or that kill.[41] The diminutive θηρία can be unspecified, but in the Hymns, for example, can also denote domestic creatures, birds and fish.[42] Various kinds of θηρά and θηρία are hunted by men or by the goddess Artemis (not the other gods), they sometimes attack men but, when captured or killed, are not sacrificed.[43]

Some representations of acts of killing and eating of living beings in Homer align with the practical notions in, e.g., Aristotle's categorical taxonomy and the notion of "animals". But the broad scope of Homer's representations does not fully align with categorical classifications, lacking the characteristics of positive science as well as the ethical, cognitive and teleological reflective statements generalizing such categories.

3.3 Consider a prominent example where, as often, complexity is hidden in plain view. The proem of the *Iliad* marks Achilleus' destructive wrath and its woes. Wrath, the narrator says (1.3-5),

> *πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν*
> *ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν*
> *οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι,*
>
> *hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls*
> *of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting*
> *of dogs, of all birds*
>
> trans. Lattimore

The horror of these words in part lies in the inversion whereby heroes who are elsewhere described as "godlike" and as themselves feasting on meat now become food. The consequences of Achilles' wrath thus overturn an

41. In Körner 1930; Keller 1963; Voultsiadou and Tatolas 2005.
42. References in LfgrE, *s.voc.*.
43. Excepting, e.g., deer. See Kirk 1980.

important thematic pattern of heroic behaviour and values.[44] We are, nevertheless, dealing with a situational pattern. We cannot map the inversion onto abstract zoological or existential categories.

Dogs, for example, are, portrayed as would-be scavengers, especially in the *Iliad,* though no such actual narratives are presented in Homer. Nor, of course, do men and women, eat dogs in Homer, though there is otherwise evidence elsewhere in antiquity for the human consumption of dog-meat.[45] Dogs are also sometimes a figure of insult. But they are otherwise famed for their speed, their obedience to their masters, and persistence.[46] Indeed, scavenging turns upside-down the behaviour of Homer's most famous dog, the faithful Argos.[47] Other beings like the Laestrygonians or Polyphemus, the cheese-maker cyclops in Odysseus' *apologue,* who are more human-like than dog-like or, for that matter, bird-like in bodily form do more readily consume human flesh. Similarly, birds and fish, though these were commonly consumed by humans in ancient Greece, are rarely eaten by heroes in the narratives of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and never willingly so.[48]

In the proem of the *Iliad,* it goes without saying that the expression *οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι* or indeed the variant *οἰωνοῖσί τε δαῖτα* are ordinary verbal figures marking the idea that *some* flying beings might scavenge the corpses of heroes and that this does not imply that *all* birds did so. But ordinary garden-variety functional semantic slippage is precisely our point. Slippage is inevitably attested in all language, ancient and modern and is the basic theoretical premise of contemporary semantics and pragmatics.[49] Linguistic meaning is determined by usage and context, not by "nature"

44. Cf., e.g., the pattern marking the suffering of war through the theme of sons dying before their fathers.

45. Snyder and Klippel 2003 (material evidence and literary sources).

46. E.g., *Il.* 8.338–40; 10.360–2; 15.579–81. For scavenging, cf. 21.203–204; *Od.* 22.474–7. Insults, see, e.g., Achilles to Hector, *Il.* 22.344 (and on such insults, generally, Leach 2000).

47. *Od.* 17.326-7 and below. Cf., e.g., Priam's dogs in *Il.* 22.66–76.

48. Cf. Odysseus' men in Thrinakia, *Od.* 12.320-57.

49. See above, n. 30.

or by historical abstractions. Some winged beings in Homer are scavengers, vultures, for example (e.g., 4.237 *τῶν ἤτοι αὐτῶν τέρενα χρόα γῦπες ἔδονται*). However, other birds and winged creatures such as sparrows are not. The sparrow's small, frightened habit makes it unsuitable for the kind of violent imagery that defines "birds" in the proem of the *Iliad*. Indeed, even if we put aside practical objections to Aristotle's categorical taxonomy of living beings, in the absence of absolute formulations of a natural order of being and a division between humans and animals in Homer, we must give the slippage of Homeric language its due.

As we have already noted, there are substantial *ad hoc* situational differences and boundaries between dogs, birds and heroes, dead or alive. But when discussing the boundaries of existence in Homer, we cannot simply assume that these are categorical distinctions, in either linguistic or in ontological terms.[50] To frame such powerful situational patterns, explicitly or implicitly, in terms of natural philosophy or an abstracted Aristotelian dichotomy between "humans" and "animals" is to force Homeric poetry and thought into a conceptual Procrustean bed by a process of gloss and supplement. We risk reducing the complexity and nuance of Heroic existence in Homeric narrative to an anachronistic projection.[51]

3.3 Consider briefly another example, whose meaning lies in plain view, yet is often distorted by elision and gloss. Birds, beings with wings and flying beings, οἰωνοί, ὄρνεα, ὄρνιθες, sometimes appear in Homer as the bearers of transcendental meaning. A bird can be observed in Homer as an omen (*τέρας*) or a sign (*σῆμα*) from the gods and mostly from Zeus, in dreams or in waking reality. In *Il.* 13.821, as Ajax taunts Hector, an eagle appears:

50. Pragmatic/functional aspects of language are beyond the remit of this essay (cf. above, n. 30). Semantics and conceptual analysis, see, e.g., Wierzbicka 1984 and the early work of W. Labov. Already Frege 1948 (1891) marked philosophically the slippage between sense and reference.

51. The horror, rather, lies in the idea of the unburied dead (cf. *Il.* 22.386; the killing of Hector and the end of the *Iliad*; *Od.* 11.54, 72, etc.).

Ὣς ἄρα οἱ εἰπόντι ἐπέπτατο δεξιὸς ὄρνις
αἰετὸς ὑψιπέτης· ἐπὶ δ' ἴαχε λαὸς Ἀχαιῶν θάρσυνος οἰωνῷ·

As he spoke so, an ominous bird winged by at his right hand,
a towering eagle, and the host of the Achaians, made brave
by the bird sign, shouted

trans. Lattimore

In these verses, *ὄρνις, αἰετός* and *οἰων* have the same reference ("the eagle that appears before the Greeks"). Indeed, here, these three words also have the same sense ("the favourable omen"). Elsewhere in Homer, of course, not all birds nor all omens are eagles, nor are all eagles omens, nor are all omens favourable like the one here. We are dealing with a familiar but decidedly partial and contingent alignment. The eagle's dominance, though only implied, e.g., in the word "towering" (*ὑψιπέτης*), is key to its interpretation by the Greeks. But the scene and its meaning are not and cannot be determined by abstractions. Sparrows too present in omens elsewhere in Homer. Yet the appearance of a sparrow in this scene would not have given courage to the Greeks.

3.4 We need not labour the point. My purpose here is not to map forms of living beings or *ζῷα* in Homer in full, nor, *a fortiori,* do I wish to do so in categorical terms. My argument is as much about the diverse practicalities of reading Homer's text as it is about general method: The verbal representation of the world of living beings in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is irreducibly complex. We often strive to organize this world and to trace recurrent patterns of one sort or another. The idea of recurrence, in Homer as in natural phenomena, provides us with some predictability, with a sense of understanding and control, with a means of managing our world. In Homer especially, patterns characterizing discourse and indeed the description of living beings abound. But the comments above suggest that every individual reference to every individual word and phrase describing living beings in Homer can be read within a dynamic, contingent network of local, intratextual and intertextual connections. Our readings are inextricable from

the history of the reception of such reference and their interpretation but never synonymous with it. *In strict scientific terms,* the relations between living beings in Homer are precarious points of tangential interaction, partial, *ad hoc* moments in which unknown or not fully known forces and elements, supplements, elisions and glosses play their role.

4. The Meaning of Complexity in Homer: Death, Mortality and Sacrifice

4.1 Stepping away from a categorical classificatory system of living beings has far-reaching implications for our understanding of Homer. In what follows, by way of illustration, I consider some pivotal questions associated with the killing of animals in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey,* with sacrifice, hecatombs and *hiera* and their relation to heroic death.

The progress of this discussion requires, as we shall see, some carefully considered steps. The conclusion, however, is simple: If we allow for existential overlaps "humans" and "animals" in Homer, if they share an existence, we can view Homer's elaborate narratives of the killing and deaths of heroes as acts of sacrifice. What's more, we can thus view Homeric poetry itself, not simply as verse that preserves the memory and fame of heroes from the past, but as a present-tense discursive sacrificial speech-act.

4.2 Killing, death and mortality – this hardly needs emphasis – are at the very core of Homer's verse.[52] Many of Homer's Heroes are killed in violent conflict on the battlefield, others die as they are homeward bound, others still (like Agamemnon or, *mutatis mutandis*, Penelope's suitors) are killed at home. .

Of course – the gods apart – mortality and death mark *all* living beings

52. Nagy 2013: 12, among other scholars, conflates mortality with "the *human* [my emphasis] condition of mortality …The certainty that one day you will die makes you human, distinct from animals who are unaware of their future death, and from the immortal gods". Such views are widely challenged, as we have seen, in both antiquity and in contemporary studies, and does not accord with Homeric evidence as, e.g., in the example of the sparrow and the serpent.

in Homer, indeed, "animals" in Homer are no less subject to death than "humans". They too are mortal. In similes and omens, in hunting scenes, in feasts and sacrifices, the death of wild beasts, of birds, of cattle, sheep, goats and pigs, are ubiquitous. Animal death is frequently violent. The lion kills the deer. The serpent kills the sparrow's young. What's more, the death of both wild and domestic beasts, both violent and timely death, is often described in highly emotive terms almost indistinguishable from terms for "human" deaths as, for example, when the sparrow's young are killed, or when Odysseus' old dog Argos' death described.

Argos case is a particularly telling. He is described as "the dog of a man who has died far away" (17.312, *καὶ λίην ἀνδρός γε κύων ὅδε τῆλε θανόντος*). Death, dying and mortality, in other words, define the setting. Argos, once a hunter, now old and neglected, lies in the dung. His demise is described pathos and emotions (326-7) indistinguishable from those that characterize Homer's heroes elsewhere :

Ἄργον δ' αὖ κατὰ μοῖρ' ἔλαβεν μέλανος θανάτοιο,
αὐτίκ' ἰδόντ' Ὀδυσῆα ἐεικοστῷ ἐνιαυτῷ.

Then in turn the doom of black death took hold of Argos,
as soon as he saw Odysseus, in the twentieth year

trans. Lattimore

The death of Odysseus' dog, the "fate that takes him", his "black death", his singular ability to recognize Odysseus' true identity (indeed, greater than that of any other human in the poem, including Penelope) are poignant marks of his existence, of the passage of heroic time, of the precarity of life and of mortality itself – common to Argos, to Odysseus, to Odysseus' old father Laertes, to the young Telemachus, the reckless suitors and the hapless servant maids, as to all other men and women in the *Odyssey* and to the mortal heroes of the *Iliad*.[53] Neglected and abandoned, Argos resem-

53. For the distinct and characteristic genitive collocation *μέλανος θανάτοιο*, applied to the death of Patroclus, see, e.g., *Iliad* 16.687.

ble Laertes in Book 24 of the *Odyssey*.[54] Indeed, the emotions he evokes are much closer to those inspired by Laertes in the final book of the *Odyssey* than by any dog in the poem, let alone by the scavenging dogs in the *Iliad*'s proem. In Homer, "animal" death can be as "human" as a death ever gets.

4.3 There is, nevertheless, at least one prominent context in Homer in which death and violent killings are described, which stands out as a puzzling outlier to the common condition of animal and human mortality. This context, I suggest, is "animal sacrifice".[55]

In Book 2 of the *Iliad,* for example, Agamemnon sacrifices a bull (*βοῦν ἱέρευσε*) to Zeus. He prays to the god (411-18), then the sacrifice proceeds, in some detail (421-29):

> *αὐτὰρ ἐπεί ῥ' εὔξαντο καὶ οὐλοχύτας προβάλοντο,*
> *ἀὐέρυσαν μὲν πρῶτα καὶ ἔσφαξαν καὶ ἔδειραν,*
> *μηρούς τ' ἐξέταμον κατά τε κνίσῃ ἐκάλυψαν*
> *δίπτυχα ποιήσαντες, ἐπ' αὐτῶν δ' ὠμοθέτησαν.*
> *καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄρ σχίζῃσιν ἀφύλλοισιν κατέκαιον,*
> *σπλάγχνα δ' ἄρ' ἀμπείραντες ὑπείρεχον Ἡφαίστοιο.*
> *αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατὰ μῆρε κάη καὶ σπλάγχνα πάσαντο,*
> *μίστυλλόν τ' ἄρα τἆλλα καὶ ἀμφ' ὀβελοῖσιν ἔπειραν,*
> *ὤπτησάν τε περιφραδέως, ἐρύσαντό τε πάντα.*
>
> *Now when all had made prayer and flung down the scattering barley, first they drew back the victim's head, cut his throat and skinned him,*[56] *and cut away the meat from the thighs and wrapped them in fat, making a double fold, and laid shreds of flesh above them. Placing these on sticks*

54. See, e.g., Sauzeau 2004.

55. For Homer: see Kirk 1980; Durand 1986; Seaford 1994; summary overview in Seaford 2011 (with listing of main passages); Burkert 1984; Mcinnerney 2010; Hitch and Rutherford 2017. Bibliography is otherwise vast and complex topic, see, with emphasis on Greco-Roman antiquity, Naiden and Rives 2016.

56. Note Lattimore's usage of the masculine (rather than neuter) pronoun "him" of the animal victim.

> *cleft and peeled they burned them, and spitted the vitals and held them over the flame of Hephaistos. But when they had burned the thigh pieces and tasted the vitals they cut all the remainder into pieces and spitted them and roasted all carefully and took off the pieces. Then after they had finished the work and got the feast ready they feasted, nor was any man's hunger denied a fair portion.*
>
> trans. Lattimore

Every reader of Homer will recognize this as a typical Homeric sacrifice, in which, as Richard Seaford, for example, rightly points out, "the predictable, peacefully ordered process of killing and cooking the animal ends in the joyful concord of the feast".[57] Such ordered sacrificial feasting scenes sharply contrast with scenes of violent, unpredictable killing on the battlefield described in gory, graphic detail. They also contrast with the violent struggle and death of beasts in the wild in other contexts in Homer's verse, as, indeed, with the pathos of Argos' quiet death upon Odysseus' return. More importantly, the specific context of Homer's sacrificial contexts separate the sacrificers/killers from the sacrificed/killed and thus give no indication of the sense of common existence or of the condition of mortality shared by heroes and all other living beings which, as we have seen, is otherwise so prominent in Homer and so important to the meaning of suffering and death in the poems.

4.4 What makes Homer's anomalous sacrificial narratives even more distinct is, as often noted, their contrast with later accounts in Greek religious practice of the relations between those who sacrifice and their victims.

Students of religion often regard the sacrificial killing of animals as a reflection of "primordial acts of violence".[58] "The ritual," as, for example, Walter Burkert following K. Meuli says, "betrays an underlying anxiety

57. Seaford 1989: 87, restated, with emphasis on "peacefully ordered" in Seaford 1994: 47; Seaford 2011.

58. Above, n. 55 and generally in anthropological literature, Hubert and Mauss 1964; Durkheim 1915; Girard 2003; further references (annotated) in Naiden and Rives 2016.

about the continuation of life in the face of death".[59] "The shock caused by the sight of flowing blood", for instance in the hunt, is matched by "fear and guilt" that "are the necessary consequences of overcoming one's inhibitions".[60] Such anxiety and guilt are commonly socialized within ritual acts of sacrifice.

Consider, for example, the important and much discussed ritual of the *bouphonia*, the "ox-slaying" sacrifice to "Zeus of the City" in the city of Athens.[61] Ancient sources describe the many details of this ritual (which for brevity I here present in highly abridged form): During the sacrifice in Athens, the priest or βουτύπος, "ox-slayer", would strike and kill the sacrificial victim. He would then throw down his axe and run away and would be ceremonially "banished" from the community. Remaining attendants to the sacrifice would offer fat and bones to the gods, roast the victim's meat and consume it. A trial was held for all involved, including the women water-bearers in the ceremony, the "ox-slayer" the axe and the knife used to skin the ox. As Lonsdale notes (in a statement of Biblical resonance…), "In ancient Greece the sacrifice of an ox was like killing a brother".[62] Here, all blood seems to mix.

4.5 Such ritual actions and their common cognizance are startlingly different in nature to sacrifice as it is described in Homer. Indeed, as Seaford, explains, descriptions of Homeric sacrifice "differ from the later evidence in three ways in particular":[63] Firstly, there is almost no mention in Homer of those elements of the sacrifice that seem to express guilt or anxiety at the killing … Shock at the spilling of blood, regarded by Burkert as essential to the Greek animal sacrifice, is absent from the Homeric descrip-

59. Public ritual killing, as opposed to killing in the heat of the moment, in combat, for example, places conscious emphasis on the horror of the act of killing.

60. Burkert 1984: 21; cf. Meuli 1946.

61. Details, sources and discussion in Burkert 1984: 136-43; Meuli 1946; Mcinnerney 2014a for some practical details.

62. Lonsdale 1979: 153.

63. 1994: 44-5.

tions. Secondly, in the later evidence the victim seems united in various respects with the human participants … And thirdly, the Homeric descriptions contain only traces of those elements which, in later evidence, seems to separate the sacrifice from everyday life.

Let us re-iterate these closely related observations with an emphasis on the commonality of animal and human life in Homer.

First, the *violence and suffering* which, as we have seen, prominently marks descriptions of the death of *all* living beings elsewhere in Homer, on the battlefield and in nature, and which is otherwise acknowledged in animal sacrifice in later sources, seem to disappear from accounts of animal sacrifice in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Second, the *shared mortality* of heroes and beasts, both wild and domestic, in Homer, a commonality also evidenced in later forms of sacrifice (the killing of an ox, e.g., in the *bouphonia* is an act of "murder"), seems too to disappear in favour of a clearly-marked and unproblematic division between those who kill and those who are killed. Here we have a second act of disappearance associated with Homeric sacrifice.

Third, the *separation of sacrifice from ordinary life* attested in later sources is blurred. Homer's "peacefully ordered" violence and the killing of sacrificial victims are seamlessly woven into the "joyful concord" of the everyday life of men and women in Homer. How can such killings (neither "joyful" nor "concordant" for the victims) fit so easily into the narrative feasting of heroes, or, indeed, into the ordinary flow of Homeric natural and domestic life as it is attested in the similes?[64] Where are the markers that would give violence – common to all, so common and graphically explicit on the battlefield, which cannot simply vanish otherwise – its due acknowledgement? Here is our third act of conceptual disappearance associated with Homeric animal sacrifice.

What, then, does this unusual tripartite anomaly of animal sacrifice

64. Seaford 1989: 87: "Of the numerous and various similes which embellish military killing in the *Iliad* not one is drawn from the everyday familiarity of blood flowing from the sacrificial weapon".

within the common existence of Homeric living beings mean? What can it tell us about Homer and his world?[65]

5. Homer's Poetry as Discursive Sacrifice

5.1 An important first step in the search for an answer to these question can be found, let me suggest, in important comments on the nature of controlled sacrificial killing. As he notes:[66] …the sacrificial meal *attempts to exclude two kinds of potentially uncontrollable violence*, the desperate struggle of the animal and the struggle among the human participants. *Both exclusions depend on careful implementation of the traditional recognized procedures* [my emphasis].

Seaford adds: …the controlled killing helps, if the shock it creates has a bonding effect, to enhance the unity of the participants. *This traditionally articulated synthesis of killing and solidarity* in contact with deity *may have served to assure at moments of transition into and out of uncertainty or suffering.* And such transitions may be marked in Homeric epic … by *formulaic description of the formulaic activity of sacrifice* [my emphasis].

The meaning of controlled killing lies precisely in the element of control, aided by traditional form, as an instrument of cognition and social cohesion.

These are important observations. Yet they falter, as we shall momentarily explain, on grounds of at least three closely-related fundamental points. The first we might call traditional-formulaic. The second concerns phenomenological-performative aspects of the text. The third depends, precisely, on the existential commonality of being of all living beings, human and animal, in Homer and otherwise, in the face of violence and death.

65. Note also that, despite frequent, explicit analogy between 'human' and 'animal' mortality, only men and women in Homer are described as *θνητοί* and *βροτοί* (LfgrE *s. voc.*; *βροτοί* strictly poetic).

66. Seaford, 1994: 49-50. Seaford (46), rightly rejects the idea that normative forms of Greek sacrifice are a later development, noting Burkert's claim that sacrificial acts originated in ancient hunting ritual.

5.2 Our first traditional-formulaic point is simple. The "formulaic description of the formulaic activity of sacrifice" may help contain "potentially uncontrollable" violence otherwise abundantly attested in Homer. But precisely such uncontrollable violence, above all in Homeric battle scenes, is far more distinctly marked by formulaic diction.[67] Indeed, formulaic descriptions are most characteristic of the uncontrollable, graphically explicit elements in Homer than of "peacefully ordered" descriptions of sacrifice.

Our second point relates to phenomenological-performative aspects of interpretation. Seaford comments on the *contents* of Homeric poetry. Epic narrative is certainly a description of events. But, whether sung or read, is also itself an event, a highly repetitive performance. Furthermore, as *contents*, Homer's heroic combat scenes are highly violent and unpredictable. However, as formulaic verse, they are exceptionally controlled, perhaps more so than any other form of discourse in antiquity or in the present day.

In performative terms, the diction of Homeric verse is a highly repetitive, controlled ('formulaic') enactment of killing. In performative terms we might thus describe such killing scenes as a ritualized form of verbal sacrifice. If we allow, as we have suggested above, that in Homer boundaries between all living beings are permeable, not categorical, we can see the discursive 'sacrifice' of Heroes for precisely what it is – a form of ritual killing of animals. It just so happens that this particular ritual places emphasis on the killing of "hero victims", as the *bouphonia,* for example, places emphasis on the ritual killing of an "ox victim".

5.3 Sacrifice, however we construe its precise meaning, it is an attempt to institutionalize and acknowledge mortality and the existential violence on which life itself is premised. As Walter Burkert, for example, puts it, "all or-

67. In studies from Parry (since 1928; see PARRY 1971) to the present. For a complete, interactive verse-by-verse analysis of repetition in the *Iliad, Odyssey,* and other early epic works, see KAHANE, MUELLER *et al.* (online).

ders and forms of authority in human society are founded on institutionalized violence".[68] The condition of mortality is, of course, a central concern of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Descriptions of "animal" sacrifice in Homer tone down and disguise such violence. They thus offer us some respite, a sense of normalcy. Yet violence itself cannot not simply vanish from existence. It must be *both* acknowledged *and* institutionalized. In its full horror, it must somehow be internalized. How, then, does this happen? The answer is self-evident to any reader of Homer. It resides in the many detailed, highly controlled, ritualized, formulaic descriptions of martial killings of heroes in Homeric verse.

5.4 If, as we have been suggesting in this essay, distinctions between animals and humans resist categorical taxonomy, if existential boundaries between all living beings in Homer, between heroes and beasts, are fluid, rather than essential, then formulaic descriptions of the violent killing of *the animals that Homer's heroes therefore are* can be viewed, quite simply, as ritualized acts of sacrifice. We can thus view Homer's verse not simply as mnemonic discourse that preserves the "imperishable fame" (*kleos aphthiton*) of mortal heroes of the past, but as a living ritual, as *an essential form of discursive sacrificial offering.*

We should remember that all sacrifice, regardless of its form, is an act of substitution. It is a vicarious act of the deepest significance that shifts violence, guilt and moral responsibility from the domain of the self to sublimated formal domains of the other.[69] Language and discourse, by virtue of their inherent symbolic function, are perhaps the most common and most powerful form of substitution, of formalized performative sublimation, even when used for everyday purposes, and certainly when it is highly formalized, as in Homer's verse.[70]

68. 1984: 1.

69. See above, n. 55. In modern philosophy, e.g., Derrida 2008; Agamben 2017; etc.

70. Homer's poetry and its content certainly take on practical ritual functions in Greek religion, in hero cult, etc. See, e.g., Burgess 2009; Nagy 2012. Nagy 2013 suggests that "Homeric poetry compensates for its avoidance of details concerning the sacrifices of animals by

We must also bear in mind that elsewhere in human culture, prominently in the Abrahamic strands of both Western and Eastern traditions, sacrifice is precisely discursive, not material. In Judaism and Islam, the scriptural narrative of the sacrifice of Isaac is the defining moment of mortal existence and religious experience. In Christianity, the sacrifice of the Son of God is likewise the defining moment of religion and belief. In all of these cases, the interface between what we would otherwise call "the human" and "the animal" is dynamic and complex. Christ is the Lamb of God. God provides a ram to replace Abraham's son Isaac as the sacrificial victim. These traditions show important affinities even as, of course, they retain fundamental differences of substance and form. Viewing the death of heroes in Homer as discursive sacrifice marks an important affinity to such frames of practice. By setting aside the human/animal divide in Homer in favour of a complex, dynamic phenomenology of living beings, we can more clearly see the meaning of the death of "godlike" heroes as a discursive act of sacrifice. From this perspective, we can reframe key Homeric concepts such as excellence, memory and "imperishable fame", not simply the elements of a response to mortality or of an attempt to preserve fleeing life and great deed from the past in lasting words. These remain seminal epic themes. But we can now also view Homeric words as a living, and in this sense *literally* "imperishable" sacrificial performance, repeated again and again at every recitation (or reading) of Homeric verse.

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dwelling on details concerning the martial deaths of heroes". Nagy argues that the generic rather than local character (in this sense, "avoiding detail") of sacrifice in Homer allows for the Panhellenic function of Homer's poetry as a kind of religious, sacrificial text.

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Katerina Carvounis

BIRD-LIKE GODS IN THE HOMERIC EPICS: ATHENA AND APOLLO IN *ILIAD* 7

Gods in the Homeric epics[1] frequently change their form to appear before mortals, often adopting the guise of a human,[2] who is usually, but not always,[3] a familiar face to the intended addressee. In a handful of scenes, however, the Olympian gods are represented as or by birds;[4] whether these are figures of speech or cases of actual transformation is a question that has been scrutinised by commentators on this scene and has led scholars interested in the representation of the divine in Greek epic to different views and approaches.[5] 'Non-anthropomorphic' appearances of divinities are mostly associated with hybrid or lesser gods (such as Hesiod's Typhoeus, Pan, the Erinyes, Centaurs, etc.), and possible traces of Minoan repre-

1. I would like to thank Professor Menelaos Christopoulos for organising and co-ordinating the 14th International Symposium on the *Odyssey* ('Human and non Human in Homeric and Archaic Epic'), where an earlier version of this paper was first delivered, and I am grateful to all the participants for the discussion that followed. The text for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in this paper is taken from M. L. West's Teubner editions (*Homerus. Ilias.* 2 vols. Leipzig / Stuttgart, 1998–2000; *Homerus. Odyssea.* Boston / Berlin, 2017). All translations of Homeric passages are from A.T. Murray (revised by W.F. Wyatt), *Homer. Iliad.* 2 vols. Cambridge MA / London, 1925, and A.T. Murray (revised by G.E. Dimmock), *Homer. Odyssey*. 2 vols. Cambridge MA / London, 1915.

2. Proteus is an exception, as he successively changes multiple forms –that of a lion, a serpent, a leopard, a boar, flowing water, a tree– when held down by Menelaus and his men (*Od*. 4.455–458): for Proteus and other 'shape-shifters' see Buxton 2009, 168–177.

3. When Hermes sets out to meet Priam who is on his way to Achilles' tent, he appears to him in the 'likeness of a young man' (*Il.* 24.347–348 *κούρῳ αἰσυμνητῆρι ἐοικώς*). Following Priam's question about his identity, Hermes replies that he is one of the Myrmidons (*Il.* 24.396–400).

4. For this wording see Lovatt 2013, 43.

5. See Buxton 2009, 30–32 for the rejection of theriomorphic gods in earlier classical scholarship.

sentations of gods in bird-form[6] or later attestations of localised cult images, as in Pausanias' account of an Arcadian Demeter having a horse-like head or a Megarian 'Athena Aithyia' (i.e. 'Athena the storm bird').[7] There are also non-human representations of the Olympians in episodes from the (later) epic tradition depicting the world in disarray: in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 5 the daughters of Pierus sing about how the Olympian gods fled to Egypt when faced with Typhon's attack and hid themselves in 'pretend shapes' (*Met.* 5.326): Jupiter became a ram, Apollo a crow, Bacchus a goat, Diana a cat, Juno a cow, Venus a fish, and Mercury an ibis bird. Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* recalls this attack by Typhon against the Olympians and refers specifically to the time when the gods took wings in order to flee and imitated the path of birds (*D.* 1.142–143 *θεοὶ πτερόεντες…/ ὀρνίθων ἀκίχητον ἐμιμήσαντο πορείην*).[8]

Having examined the cases that potentially involve avian transformation in the Homeric epics, Franz Dirlmeier concluded in 1967 that they are all similes.[9] The opposite view was put forward a few years later by Helmut Erbse, who made the case for transformation to underline the idea that gods in Homer hide behind different creatures and that mortals thus feel close to the supernatural.[10] Other scholars have examined the scenes in question individually and they have variously interpreted them often through comparing with other scenes of possible avian transformation that are regarded as 'less ambiguous' ones.[11] And yet, the ambiguity sur-

6. Wesselmann 2020, 48. See also Petridou 2015, 89 (with n. 322, where she refers to the views put forward by Nilsson and Dietrich for the gods' potential avian transformations in Homer as 'residues from the so-called 'Minoan religion'').

7. For the Arcadian Demeter see Buxton 2010, 89, where he states, however, that 'anthropomorphism remains unquestionably predominant'. For Athena *Aἴθυια* see Petridou 2015, 89–90.

8. See Carvounis / Papaioannou 2022 for this myth in Nonnus and Ovid.

9. Dirlmeier 1967.

10. Erbse 1980, 273–274; see also Bannert 1978, Bannert 1988, 57–68.

11. Buxton 2004, Buxton 2009, and Buxton 2010 are an exception to this trend and, as it will be shown later, advance the discussion in significant ways. Petridou 2015, 88–90, also discusses these scenes as a group from the broader perspective of epiphanies.

rounding divine appearances underlines precisely the power of the gods, which is implied through the very idea of credible transformation.

The main part of this paper will focus on the brief scene between Athena and Apollo at the start of *Iliad* 7, where the two gods sit on a tree as vultures (7.59 *ὄρνισιν ἐοικότες αἰγυπιοῖσιν*) to watch the ensuing action of the mortals, after having agreed to orchestrate a duel between Hector and an Achaean (7.17–61). In what follows, I shall first discuss the broader question of avian transformation in the Homeric epics to argue that this need not necessarily be excluded (at least in one case), but the majority of these scenes do not allow the question to be pursued any further. I shall then discuss what the vulture imagery applied to Athena and Apollo in *Iliad* 7 watching the Greeks adds to our understanding of this episode and of the distance separating mortals from immortals in the Homeric world.

1. Transformation into birds?

There are several scenes in the *Odyssey* and fewer in the *Iliad*, where the question of divine transformation into birds is raised, and in both epics such scenes tend to depict either the gods' swift and sudden motion as they come and go, or their watchful gaze as they sit and observe.[12] The scene that has attracted more scholarly attention from the first group involving divine motion is the one describing Athena's departure from Telemachus' side in *Odyssey* 3. The goddess had taken the form of Mentor to accompany Telemachus to Pylos and, after heralds have poured libations and Nestor has invited 'Mentor' and Telemachus to his house, Athena replies that she will return to the ships and leave in the morning. She then departs *φήνηι εἰδομένη* (3.372, 'in the likeness of a sea eagle') and the narrator's focus falls on the reaction of all who saw this departure and experience *θάμβος*,

12. The most relevant scenes in both Homeric epics are *Il.* 7.58–61 (Athena and Apollo), *Il.* 14.286–291 (Sleep) and *Od.* 22.239–240 (Athena) for seated gods being likened to, or taking the form of, birds, whereas for gods in motion the relevant scenes are *Il.* 15.236–238 (Apollo), *Od.* 1.319–320 (Athena), *Od.* 3.371–373 (Athena), *Od.* 5.51–54 (Hermes), and *Od.* 5.352–353 (Leucothea).

and on Nestor in particular:[13] 3.372–373 θάμβος δ' ἔλε πάντας ἰδόντας. / θαύμαζεν δ' ὁ γεραιός, ὅπως ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσι. ('And amazement fell upon everyone at the sight, and the old man marveled, when his eyes beheld it'.) In addressing Telemachus, Nestor recognises it was Athena who has just departed; he prays to her and prepares sacrifices (3.375–394).

The text here gives no further hint as to what feature Athena shares with this bird and the ancient scholia offer different explanations on the choice of bird, focusing on its speed and its care for the young.[14] A case for transformation can be attractive here, since εἰδομένη (3.373) is a linguistic marker associated with transformation elsewhere in Homer,[15] while the religious context of this scene with the pouring of libations to gods offers a suitable setting for an epiphany, where θάμβος, 'a typical concomitant *semeion*',[16] is experienced collectively.

This scene is often discussed in conjunction with another one from the *Odyssey*, which describes the sudden departure of Athena, who had taken the form of Mentes (1.105 *εἰδομένη ξείνωι, Ταφίων ἠγήτορι Μέντηι*) to advise Telemachus: *ἦ μὲν ἄρ' ὣς εἰποῦσ' ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη,/ ὄρνις δ' ὡς ἀν' ὀπαῖα διέπτατο* (1.319–320). The interpretation of this scene, however, presents certain difficulties and the terms *ἀν' ὀπαῖα* have been scrutinised already from antiquity: the scholia differentiate between *ἀνόπαια*, which was taken as the name of a bird, and ἀνοπαῖα, which was understood as 'invisible', while they also add the information that others interpreted this word as *ἀνὰ τὴν ὀπήν*, that is, 'through the hole' that ancient houses had

13. As the scholia note (Pontani 2010, 134), the 'Achaeans' here point to the people of Pylos, who are amazed, rather than Nestor, who has seen many divine epiphanies, but marvels because Athena stands by someone so young (*Νέστωρ δὲ οὐ τοῦτο θαυμάζει, ἅτε δὴ πολλὰς ἐπιφανείας θεῶν ἑωρακώς, ἀλλ' ὅτι νεωτέρῳ τῷ Τηλεμάχῳ παρείη θεός*).

14. Sch. on *Od.* 3.372 (Pontani 2010, 131): *ὄρνεον ἡ φήνη ἀετῷ ὅμοιον· διὰ τὸ τάχος γοῦν αὐτὸν τῇ φήνῃ παρείκασεν. ἄλλοι δε φασιν ὅτι σημεῖον εἶδε φήνην. τινὲς δὲ ὅτι καθὰ ἡ φήνη τῶν νεοσσῶν τῶν ἀετῶν ἐπιμέλειαν ἔχει, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Μέντης.*

15. See, e.g., *εἰδομένη* (*Il.* 3.122), *(ἐ)εισαμένη (Il. 3.389, 5.785), εἰσάμενος* (*Il.* 13.45), *εἰδόμενος* (*Il.* 13.69).

16. Petridou 2015, 88.

in the ceiling.[17] This third interpretation of *ἀν' ὀπαῖα*, which supports the visual element of disappearance through a specific location in the building, together with the reference to *θάμβος* following Athena's sudden departure could also help make a case for transformation here.[18] However, *θάμβος* here is experienced by Telemachus alone (1.323 *θάμβησεν κατὰ θυμόν· ὀΐσατο γὰρ θεὸν εἶναι*),[19] who realises that a god has departed from his company,[20] but, unlike the corresponding scene in *Od.* 3.373–374, the linguistic element here (*ὥς*) is commonly used for comparison rather than transformation, and it is more likely that Athena-Mentes disappears 'like a bird'.[21]

From among the scenes that depict a god like or in the likeness of a bird a plausible case for avian transformation can be made for Sleep in *Iliad* 14 as he arrives on Ida and hides from Zeus' sight until it is the right moment for him to act following his agreement with Hera (*Il.* 14.286–291):

ἔνθ' Ὕπνος μὲν ἔμεινε πάρος Διὸς ὄσσε ἰδέσθαι,
εἰς ἐλάτην ἀναβὰς περιμήκετον, ἥ τότ' ἐν Ἴδηι

17. Sch. on *Od.* 1.320 (Pontani 2007, 165): *ὁ μὲν Ἀρίσταρχος "ἀνόπαια" προπαροξυτόνως ἀναγινώσκει ὄνομα ὄρνιθος λέγων, ὁ δὲ Ἡρωδιανὸς "ἀνοπαῖα" ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀοράτως, ἵν' ᾖ οὐδέτερον πληθυντικόν, ὡς τὸ "πυκνὰ μάλα στενάχων"* [Σ 318]*· διὸ καὶ προπερσπαστέον φησίν. οἱ δε, ἀνὰ τὴν ὀπήν· οἱ γὰρ ἀρχαῖοι οἴκοι ἐν μέσῳ τῆς ὀροφῆς ὀπὴν εἶχον, ἣν καὶ καπνοδόχον ἐκάλουν.*

18. See, e.g., West 1988, 116, who concludes tentatively that 'it is difficult to avoid the inference that Athena is supposed to be transformed into a bird'. Cf. De Jong 2001, 33–34: 'Perhaps the matter should not be pressed. What is described is an unnaturally quick disappearance'.

19. Petridou 2015, 88 draws a distinction between Telemachus' reaction here, which is 'described as an internalised intellectual process, through which he infers he has just been confronted with a god' and the collective *thambos* in *Odyssey* 3 (see above).

20. As Buxton 2010, 83 puts it in more general terms, *θάμβος* often signals that observers within the narrative are astounded at the irruption of the sacred into the everyday'.

21. I agree here with Kirk 1990, 239. *Pace* Buxton 2009, 32–33, who argues that '[t]o say that Athene-as-Mentes vanishes, and that a bird *then* flies off, is to bleach out some of the strangeness of what we actually have before us.' The form of gods' entrances (and exits) from the human plane are not always described in the Homeric epics and the verb διέπτατο (1.320) should be sufficient in this context to imply the speed of the goddess, who is here likened to a bird.

μακροτάτη πεφυυῖα δι᾽ ἠέρος αἰθέρ᾽ ἵκανεν·
ἔνθ᾽ ἧστ᾽ ὄζοισιν <u>πεπυκασμένος</u> εἰλατίνοισιν,
***ὄρνιθι λιγυρῇι ἐναλίγκιος**, ἥν τ᾽ ἐν ὄρεσσιν*
χαλκίδα κικλήσκουσι θεοί, ἄνδρες δὲ κύμινδιν.

There Sleep halted, before the eyes of Zeus saw him, and mounted up on an exceedingly tall fir tree, the highest that then grew in Ida; and it reached up through the mists into the heaven. On it he sat, hidden by the branches of the fir, in the likeness of[22] *a clear-voiced mountain bird that the gods call chalcis, but men call cymindis.*

There are no internal human viewers within this scene, but Sleep's purpose is clearly to hide from Zeus, as he 'halted *before the eyes of Zeus saw him*' and sat 'hidden' (*πεπυκασμένος*, lit. 'thickly covered') by the branches of the fir tree. Earlier in the *Iliad* Athena had sought to avoid being seen by Ares and had thus put on 'the cap of Hades' (5.845 *Ἄϊδος κυνέην*),[23] which is, therefore, another case in the same epic for a divinity changing form in order to elude the attention of another. The choice of bird to which Sleep is likened here is apt: as Janko points out, it is a kind of owl, and 'a bird sleepy by day certainly suits Sleep best'.[24]

In cases where there are no internal viewers (human or divine) and where a potential transformation seems to be unmotivated or entirely inconsequential, it is not obvious what may be gained from assuming that a transformation has indeed taken place. Readers or listeners may rather un-

22. The word *ἐναλίγκιος* (like *ἐοικώς*) does not necessarily indicate transformation, as it can also introduce a simile (cf. e.g. *Il.* 13.242, where Idomeneus moves *ἀστεροπῇι ἐναλίγκιος*).

23. See Kirk 1990, 147 for further discussion and for the etymology of Hades as *ἀ-Fίδης*, 'the unseen one'; he also mentions that this is the earliest testimony for the cap of invisibility in a Greek context, followed by *Aspis* 227.

24. Janko 1992, 197, adds that Homer may be alluding to 'a tale that the girl turned into this bird… This explains why we are told what the divine name is: gods alone can recognize the owl as the girl Khalkis. The allusion is witty, because Sleep disguises himself as a bird that is only disguised as a bird, and is really a person.'

derstand the divinity's likeness to a bird as a figure of speech with the poet either explaining in what way the god in question is *like* a specific bird or prompting the readers or listeners to do so through hints in the text itself, such as an evocative verb or further description of the bird in question, pointing to, and subtly nuancing, the larger narrative context.[25]

Let me illustrate this briefly with two examples involving the falcon in the *Iliad* (*ἱέραξ*, ep. *ἴρηξ*), which are readily accepted by most scholars as short similes. First, when Apollo in *Iliad* 15 descends 'like a hawk' from Ida to encourage Hector, both the bird's speed and its ability to kill doves are underlined through the epithets *ὠκύς* (and its superlative *ὤκιστος*) and *φασσοφόνος*, which is a Homeric *hapax*: 15.237–238 *βῆ δὲ κατ' Ἰδαίων ὀρέων, ἴρηκι ἐοικώς/ ὠκέϊ φασσοφόνωι, ὅς τ' ὤκιστος πετεηνῶν* ('but went down from the hills of Ida like a fleet falcon, the slayer of doves, which is the swiftest of winged things').[26] Therefore, in drawing correspondences with the narrative context, as the scholia bT imply, in addition to Apollo's speed, it is also his intention to bring death to the Greeks that is here underlined.[27] Later on in *Il.* 18.616 Thetis, springing 'like a falcon' (*ἴρηξ ὥς*), carries down from Olympus Achilles' new armour. The choice of bird is conditioned by, and reminds us of, the urgency of the context, for Achilles is most keen to enter the battlefield again.[28] In both cases, the reader /

25. This is what Buxton 2004, 141, has called a 'rhetorical-thematic' interest in similes.

26. *Φασσοφόνος* (Hom. *hapax*) was later the name of a type of hawk: Thompson 1936, 300–302.

27. Janko 1992, 252.

28. See Tsagarakis 1982, 136–137. As Edwards 1991, 233, puts it, 'obviously speed, not disguise, is the point here.' Another simile likening a god to a hawk occurs in the battle among the gods in *Il.* 21.494–496, where Hera beats Artemis about the ears and the latter 'weeping… fled from before her like a dove' (21.493 *δακρυόεσσα δ' ὕπαιθα θεὰ φύγεν ὥς τε πέλεια*), which 'from before a falcon flies into a hollow rock, a cleft' (21.494 *ἥ ῥά θ' ὑπ' ἴρηκος κοίλην εἰσέπτατο πέτρην/ χηραμόν*), with the repetition of the verb *φύγεν* (21.493, 496) underlining the flight of the goddess and the dove. Richardson 1993, 95 compares the simile of the hawk and pigeon at 22.139–144, where a falcon in the mountains (22.139 *κίρκος ὄρεσφιν*) is shown 'swoop[ing] easily after a fluttering dove' (22.140 *ῥηϊδίως οἴμησε μετὰ τρήρωνα πέλειαν*), which 'flees before him' (22.141 *ἣ δέ θ' ὕπαιθα φοβεῖται*). See

listener does not necessarily imagine the gods in question changing their form, but is rather prompted to think of different aspects of the falcon that are activated in these similes and which relate to the narrative context.

There is, then, no reason why avian transformations of gods in Homer must all be rejected, and the example of Sleep in *Iliad* 14 may be an instance of an actual transformation, while in other cases (like those with Thetis and Apollo descending like hawks) a simile is surely implied. Each scene needs to be considered individually and most remain ambiguous; as Richard Buxton has put it, 'after all, since one of the attributes of a Greek divinity can be mystery, why should a poet not register that mystery by means of ambiguity?'[29]

2. Apollo and Athena in a shared vulture-like imagery

Let us now return to Athena and Apollo in *Iliad* 7 and look closely at this scene within its context.[30] Hector and Paris have just emerged from Troy with renewed energy and engage in battle (7.1–16). Athena notices them from Olympus and darts down to Ilion, while Apollo, who has also been looking down from Pergamus, rushes down to meet her.

τοὺς δ' ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
Ἀργείους ὀλέκοντας ἐνὶ κρατερῇι ὑσμίνηι,
βῆ ῥα κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων ἀΐξασα
Ἴλιον εἰς ἱερήν. τῆι δ' ἀντίος ὦρνυτ' Ἀπόλλων
Περγάμου ἐκκατιδών, Τρώεσσι δὲ βούλετο νίκην·

Tsagarakis 1982, 137, on the simile being appropriate to the situation, with the weaker party yielding and taking refuge to a safer place.

29. Buxton 2004, 143.

30. This scene stands in contrast to that between Athena and Ares at the start of *Iliad* 5, where Athena suggests they withdraw and let the Trojans and the Achaeans fight among themselves and Zeus decide the winner (*Il.* 5.29–35). Ares is subsequently seated on the banks of Scamander and the narrative follows the actions of the mortals. The two gods, however, intervene later, with Athena responding to Diomedes' prayer (5.121–132) and Ares giving his horses to Aphrodite (5.363) before entering the battle at Apollo's exhortation (5.454ff.).

ἀλλήλοισι δὲ τώ γε συναντέσθην παρὰ φηγῶι. (*Iliad* 7.17–22)

But when the goddess, flashing-eyed Athene, noticed them as they were slaying the Argives in the mighty combat, she darted down from the peaks of Olympus to sacred Ilios. And Apollo rushed to meet her, for he had looked down from Pergamus and seen her, and was eager to have victory for the Trojans. So the two met one another by the oak tree.

Apollo adopts a polite tone in addressing Athena as 'daughter of great Zeus' (7.24 *Διὸς θύγατερ μεγάλοιο*) and draws attention to her 'great heart' (7.25 *μέγας… θυμός*). He asks the reason for her descent from Olympus and suggests that she may want to give to the Greeks 'victory to turn the tide of battle' (7.26 *μάχης ἑτεραλκέα νίκην*), since she does not pity, as he puts it, the Trojans who are perishing. He suggests they stop the war for the day (7.30 *σήμερον*), adding that men will later (7.30 *ὕστερον*) resume fighting 'until they win the goal of Ilios' (7.30–31), since 'thus it seems good to the hearts of you immortal goddesses' (7.31–32 *ὣς φίλον ἔπλετο θυμῶι/ ὑμῖν ἀθανάτηισι*), to sack that city.[31] Athena agrees, and asks Apollo how he intends to achieve this, to which he suggests they encourage Hector to challenge one of the Achaeans in a duel (7.38–40). Athena obeys and the gods' plan is conveyed to Hector through the seer Helenus, who –uniquely here – 'understood in his heart their plan' (7.44–45 *σύνθετο θυμῶι/ βουλήν*) that 'had found pleasure with the gods in council' (7.45 *θεοῖσιν ἐφήνδανε μητιόωσιν*). Helenus instructs Hector to make both armies sit down and to challenge in a duel 'the best of the Achaeans' (7.50 *Ἀχαιῶν ὅς τις ἄριστος*).[32] Helenus adds that, on the basis of what he has heard from the gods, Hector is not yet fated to die (7.53). Hector rejoices greatly (7.54); he makes the

31. Through this feminine form (*ἀθανάτηισι*) Apollo points here specifically at Athena and Hera, who have been already shown (most clearly at the start of *Iliad* 4: 4.7–10, 20–21) to be intent on the destruction of Troy. See Myers 2012, 123 n. 29 for *ἀθανάτηισι* / *ἀθανάτοισι* here.

32. As Wesselmann 2020, 44, rightly notes, Apollo had originally mentioned 'one of the Danaans' (7.39 *τινά… Δαναῶν*).

Trojans sit down (7.56 *τοὶ δ' ἱδρύνθησαν ἅπαντες*) and Agamemnon does likewise (7.57 *κὰδ δ' Ἀγαμέμνων εἶσεν ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιούς*). The narrator briefly then turns again to Athena and Apollo, who sit 'in the likeness of vultures' (7.59 *ὄρνισιν ἐοικότες αἰγυπιοῖσιν*) on Zeus' oak tree:

> *κὰδ δ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίη τε καὶ ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων*
> *ἑζέσθην, **ὄρνισιν ἐοικότες αἰγυπιοῖσιν**,*
> *φηγῶι ἔφ' ὑψηλῆι πατρὸς Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,*
> *ἀνδράσι τερπόμενοι. τῶν δὲ στίχες εἵατο πυκναί,*
> *ἀσπίσι καὶ κορύθεσσι καὶ ἔγχεσι πεφρικυῖαι.* (*Iliad* 7.58–62)
>
> *And Athene and Apollo of the silver bow in the likeness of vultures sat on the lofty oak of father Zeus who bears the aegis, rejoicing in the warriors; and the ranks of these sat close, bristling with shields and helmets and spears.*

Scholarly opinion is divided about whether the phrase *ὄρνισιν ἐοικότες αἰγυπιοῖσιν* (7.59) indicates transformation[33] or likeness.[34] The linguistic marker *ἐοικότες* elsewhere introduces either similes or change in form,[35] and in the absence of viewers there is no motivation for, or impact from, such a change here, as was the case with the likely transformations of Sleep and Athena in *Iliad* 14 and *Odyssey* 3 respectively. In this respect, the present imagery of Apollo and Athena shares something with that of Hermes travelling to Calypso like, or in the form of, a bird (*Od.* 5.51 *λάρωι ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς*), for, like him, they too are removed from the divine plane while remaining unnoticed by mortals.[36] Although the case for avian transformation cannot be pressed further, the imagery itself and its application to Athena and Apollo together, as they sit (*ἑζέσθην*) on the tree and

33. This is assumed in, e.g. Clay 2011, 3, and Rutherford 2019, 230. See also Leaf ad loc.

34. See, e.g., Kirk 1990, 240; Wesselmann 2020, 48–49.

35. Kirk 1990, 240.

36. See Buxton 2009, 46, who concludes that it is appropriate that mystery, which is an attribute of Greek divinities, should thus be reflected in the narrative.

derive pleasure (*τερπόμενοι*) in the warriors, invite further discussion.

As with Athena in *Od.* 22.239–240, who watches from above like – or in the likeness of – a swallow, here, too, the imagery of gods seated like vultures draws attention to their wider perspective over the space of mortals, but the imagery of birds of prey in particular adds a sense of foreboding:[37] unlike other instances in early Greek hexameter poetry where vultures are commonly shown in motion or in attack,[38] here the vulture-like gods remain seated. The fact that Apollo has explicitly stated that his intention is to pause, not end, the fight may indicate that the gods' lust for fight has only temporarily been supressed.[39]

Myers has recently argued that the pleasure of viewing experienced by Athena and Apollo here 'derives from the sight of men settling themselves like the rippling sea' (7.61), which is then elaborated in a simile likening the movement of the army to that of the surface of the sea; the gods thus experience the same pleasure derived from the picture that the poet offers to the listeners through this song.[40] The emphasis on the gods' seated position as they watch this sight also directs us to parallels of gods watching with enjoyment events in the human plane: Zeus sitting among the mountain tops, exulting and watching the Trojans and the Greeks (*Il.* 8.51–52, *Il.* 11.80–82), has been pointed out as a model for Athena and Apollo here rejoicing in the warriors.[41]

Another significant parallel can be found at the start of *Iliad* 4: although there had been no references to divine spectators while the duel between Menelaus and Paris was in progress, it retrospectively becomes clear that,

37. See Erbse 1980, 271 (arguing for transformation). It has been argued that the imagery of birds of prey may have a connection with, or explanation for, Helenus' unique way of understanding divine intentions: Petridou 2015, 89.

38. For instance, Automedon in *Il.* 17.460 fights 'like a vulture (*αἰγυπιός*) on a flock of geese', while Cycnus and Heracles in *Aspis* 405–412 attack each other like vultures fighting over a dead mountain goat or deer.

39. See Tsagarakis 1982, 137–138; Johansson 2012, 88; Wesselmann 2020, 49.

40. Myers 2019, 117–118.

41. Kirk 1990, 240.

apart from Aphrodite, who had been looking out for Paris (3.374) and intervened to save him, Athena and Hera, according to Zeus, had been sitting apart and taking pleasure in viewing (4.9–10 *ἀλλ᾽ ἦτοι ταὶ νόσφι καθήμεναι εἰσορόωσαι / τέρπεσθον*). Whereas this alliance between Hera and Athena is not surprising, since the two goddesses are often seen to act together to help the Greeks when the latter are in difficulties (*Il.* 1.194–195, 2.155ff., 5.711ff., 8.350ff.), this is a rare (if not unique) instance of the same imagery – and indeed a bird-imagery – being applied to two gods[42] on opposite sides and with contrasting roles throughout the *Iliad*.

Their relationship with the leading heroes of each side is particularly interesting: Athena protects Achilles already in her first intervention in the epic (*Il.* 1.194–222) and leads Hector to his death in *Iliad* 22, while Apollo consistently protects Hector and brings about the downfall of Patroclus in *Iliad* 16, when the latter is standing in for Achilles himself.[43] The scene describing the gods' parallel yet contrasting movements in the defining moments of the final duel between Hector and Achilles in *Iliad* 22 is telling: as soon as Hector's fate sinks on the golden scales of Zeus, Apollo leaves the Trojan hero (22.213 *λίπεν δέ ἑ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων*)[44] and Athena immediately reaches Achilles (22.214 *Πηλῐ̈ωνα δ᾽ ἵκανε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη*).[45] She

42. The only other simultaneous divine transformation I have found is that of Poseidon and Athena, who appear before Achilles as mortals as he fights with the river-god Scamander: *Il.* 21.284 *δέμας δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσιν ἐίκτην*.

43. As Pucci 1985, 173–174, notes, the two gods use the same gesture to protect Achilles and to strike down Patroclus: Athena thus –uniquely– stands *behind* the hero (*Il.* 1.197 *στῆ δ᾽ ὄπιθεν*) when she intervenes to restrain Achilles, just as Apollo when he strikes Patroclus (*Il.* 16.791–792 *στῆ δ᾽ ὄπιθεν, πλῆξεν δὲ μετάφρενον εὐρέε τ᾽ ὤμω/ χειρὶ καταπηνεῖ*, 'and Apollo stood behind him, and struck his back and broad shoulders with the flat of his hand'). See also Schäfer 1990, 151–152 on Athena and Apollo in *Iliad* 22.

44. See De Jong 2012, 114 (ad loc.): 'the verb *λείπω* primarily means 'to leave a person behind while one departs'… but at times it may have the more pregnant meaning 'leave to one's fate', 'abandon'.' As Richardson 1993, 130, puts it, Apollo's 'desertion of Hektor both contributes to Hektor's death and is the result of its imminence, since the gods avoid contact with death where possible'.

45. Richardson 1993, 130, also notes here 'the vivid juxtaposition with Athene's arrival at Akhilleus' side in 214'.

stands close (without disguise) and addresses him, openly expressing her expectation of imminent victory,[46] for Hector can no longer escape, even if Apollo 'should go to any lengths, grovelling (*προπροκυλινδόμενος*) before Father Zeus', as she puts it (22.219–21), thus underlining the front she has formed with Achilles against Hector and Apollo.[47] As de Jong puts it here, 'if Achilles is taking revenge on his archenemy Hector, Athena seems to enjoy *her* moment of triumph over pro-Trojan Apollo'.[48] Athena then leaves Achilles (22.226 *ἦ δ' ἄρα τὸν μὲν ἔλειπε*) and reaches Hector in the form of his brother Deiphobus. When applied to Apollo, the verb *λείπω* had conveyed an act of desertion, as the god ceased to protect Hector and left his side; the same verb, however, describes Athena's temporary departure so that she may secure victory for her protégé, as she will lure Hector with false hopes to face Achilles (22.229–231).[49]

The competitive relationship between Athena and Apollo in the *Iliad* extends to actions that have no obvious impact or consequences. In the night-attack in *Iliad* 10, Diomedes deliberates what to do with the booty and Athena (without disguise) stands close, urging him to return to the ships for fear 'some other god' should rouse the Trojans (10.511 *μή πού τις… θεὸς ἄλλος*), and Diomedes duly obeys (10.512). It is only after Apollo sees Athena attending Diomedes (10.516) that he is stirred to action in anger (10.517 *τῆι κοτέων*): he enters the Trojan crowd and awakens the Thracian Hippocoon; but it is too late, for the Greeks have reached their ships safely and the Trojans have been alerted to no effect.[50]

46. Note the use of duals and the plural throughout Athena's speech to Achilles: *Il.* 22.216–19 *νῦν δὴ νῶι ἔολπα…/ οἴσεσθαι μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιοῖσι προτὶ νῆας,/Ἕκτορα δηώσαντε… / οὔ οἱ νῦν ἔτι γ' ἔστι πεφυγμένον ἄμμε γενέσθαι.*

47. According to Richardson 1993, 130, these lines and especially the use of the compound *προπροκυλινδόμενος* are 'remarkably contemptuous towards Apollo'.

48. De Jong 2012, 115.

49. Hector will become aware of Athena's role in his downfall (*Il.* 22.299 *ἐμὲ δ' ἐξαπάτησεν Ἀθήνη*), while Achilles has been warned that Apollo will be behind his own downfall, although he cannot understand this yet, as it becomes obvious when he questions Thetis' old prophecy that he would die by Apollo's shafts (*Il.* 21.273–278).

50. See Duë / Ebbott 2010, 360 (on *Il.* 10.482 *τῷ δ' ἔμπνευσε μένος γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη*,

Further interventions by Apollo and Athena in a minor event that has no bearing on the overall plot of the epic take place in the chariot-race in *Iliad* 23. Diomedes is in a close second position and would have overtaken Admetus' son Eumelus, who has just taken the lead, had not Apollo resentfully (23.383 *εἰ μὴ Τυδέος υἷι κοτέσσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων*) thrown the whip from Diomedes' hand, bringing tears of frustration to the hero's eyes (23.382–387). In cheating Diomedes, however, Apollo does not escape Athena's notice (23.388 *οὐδ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίην ἐλεφηράμενος λάθ' Ἀπόλλων/ Τυδεΐδην*); she swiftly intervenes to restore the whip and, in her resentment (23.391 *κοτέουσα*),[51] breaks the yoke of Eumelus' steeds, so the horses swerve in different directions and Eumelus himself falls and is reduced to tears. Diomedes continues his course with Athena having put might in his horses (23.388–400), and he is eventually acknowledged as the winner of this event.

This competitive relationship is hardly evident in the scene under scrutiny in *Iliad* 7:[52] in first suggesting to Athena that they temporarily stop the war, Apollo uses the plural παύσωμεν (7.29) and then continues with the plural *ὄρσωμεν* (7.38), thus adopting, in Wesselmann's words, a 'diplomatic tone'.[53] As the two gods here seem to act in unison, so, too, the Trojans and the Greeks collectively obey their leaders and sit down as one (7.56–57), forming the sea-imagery that is conveyed through the subsequent simile (7.63–65). In Hector's subsequent duel with Ajax in *Iliad* 7, the two heralds of each army, Idaeus and Talthybius, will simultaneously interrupt

which is compared to *Il.* 15.262 where Apollo breathes *μένος* into Hector): 'Thus this "inspiration" happens between gods and their favorites, and we find in this episode in Book 10 a pattern of opposition between Athena and Apollo (we can compare their direct rivalry in *Iliad* 7).'

51. See Richardson 1993, 216 for echoes in 392 and 383.

52. As Myers 2019, 125 puts it, the gods' 'proximity and shared experience of pleasure suggest their contrasting reactions to war are subsumed under the poem's power to entertain and that conflicting feelings of partisanship and pity may be present within a single audience'.

53. Wesselmann 2020, 32.

the duel to declare a draw between Hector and Ajax (7.274–277), who will conclude their duel with an exchange of gifts (7.303–305).

Therefore, the (temporary) respite in the rivalry between Apollo and Athena at the start of the book is also reflected in the coordinated actions of the armies and the heralds, and in the conclusion of the duel. And yet, despite these correspondences between the divine and human settings, attention is drawn to the existing gap between gods and men. The oak that was mentioned simply as *φηγός* when the two gods first met (7.22) is now described in further detail as the tall oak of 'father Zeus' (7.66 *φηγῷ ἐφ' ὑψηλῇ πατρὸς Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο*),[54] thus underlining the connection between Athena and Apollo.[55] They are able to leave aside their differences at will and enjoy (7.61 *τερπόμενοι*) watching the actions on the mortal plane without being noticed, even when they intervene in the actual duel, as is the case with Apollo helping Hector after the latter was hit by Ajax (*Il.* 7.272).[56] Despite their rivalry, Athena and Apollo here enjoy watching what the mortals cannot appreciate from within.

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54. Wesselmann 2020, 32.

55. If it is not a case of avian transformation, then the anthropomorphism inherent in Apollo and Athena sitting on their father's tree and enjoying the sight makes them even more distant from the humans.

56. Myers 2019, 12.

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POLYPHEMUS AS MONSTER / HUMAN

The Cyclops Polyphemus in *Odyssey* Book 9 is often called a "monster." Homeric scholars tend to refer to Polyphemus as a monster and translators regularly designate the Cyclops as such. If by "monster" a non-human is meant, this is certainly misleading. The Homeric text repeatedly designates Polyphemus and the Cyclopes as humans, and the humanity of Polyphemus and his fellow Cyclopes is essential for anthropological issues of the episode. How the Homeric Cyclopes are human requires some explication, with clarification of ancient and modern teratological terminology. I will review ancient concepts of the monstrous to aid a close reading of Odysseus' description of the Cyclops. I will then contextualize my analysis by reference to Greco-Roman ethnography about peripheral humans with irregular form and unusual cultures. My conclusion will be that the Homeric Cyclopes are primarily portrayed as humans of unusual lifestyle, as judged by Greek ethnocentric standards. Ethnography, not teratology, is thus the key theme of the Polyphemus episode.

Polyphemus undoubtedly defies expectations of a human.[1] He is larger and stronger than a normal human and he has divine parents. And he has a single eye, though Odysseus does not stress this. Polyphemus is also an unusual Cyclops.[2] The Hesiodic Cyclopes are Titans born from Ura-

1. By "human" I mean *homo sapiens*, a species of the primate family. Below I avoid using the term "race," as a non-biological construct that is historically problematic term (see https://physanth.org/about/position-statements/aapa-statement-race-and-racism-2019/). For conflation of "race" and monstrosity in the Medieval Age, see Strickland 2013 (note in particular a 15th c. illustration of the *Alexander Romance* that depicts Saracens as one-eyed [378]).

2. On the characteristics and types of Cyclopes, see Mondi 1983; Bremmer 2002, 139-140; Aguirre and Buxton 2020, 5-6.

nus and Gaea, whereas Polyphemus is the child of Poseidon and the sea nymph Thoosa. The Hesiodic Cyclopes are three in number; the Homeric Cyclopes are an exotic tribe. The Hesiodic Cyclopes make thunderbolts for Zeus, as reflected int their names (Bronte, Sterope, and Arges); other Cyclopes in antiquity were forge-workers or wall-builders. On the evidence of Polyphemus, the Homeric Cyclopes are pastoralists.[3] The three major types of ancient Cyclopes may make different things (thunderbolts, metalwork, walls) but are all associated with handiwork.[4] Polyphemus is comparable as a skilled herdsman and cheese-maker. Polyphemus thus fits Hesiod's general description of Cyclopes as strong craftsmen (*Theog.* 146).

Odysseus, however, describes Polyphemus and his fellow Cyclopes in anthropological, and thus human, terms. Though the hero is curious about the pastoral lifestyle (e.g., 9. 216-223, 237-249, 308-316, 336-342), he emphasizes what the Homeric Cyclopes lack: agriculture, a political system, ships, and trade (9. 107-115; 125-130). On a narrative level Polyphemus has Cyclopic characteristics because these are useful for the causality of the plot. But thematically Odysseus is more interested in the human culture of the human Cyclopes. It is certainly paradoxical for the Homeric Cyclopes to be a composite of divinities/monsters/humans, but Odysseus/Homer make it work. That we rarely pause over the mystery of Polyphemus' exact species is a testament to the charm of Homeric poetry. But the assumption that Polyphemus is non-human obscures the episode's ethnography.

Causality and Motivation

We begin with analysis of the episode with recourse to narratological and comparative studies.[5] A close reading will explain why the Cyclopic na-

3. On pastoralism as a cultural concept in antiquity, cf. Shaw 1982/83; Gutzwiller 2006; Bakker 2013, 48-52, 57-73.

4. See Aguirre and Buxton 2020:28-32 for bibliography and discussion. Bremmer 2002 argues that the Homeric episode shares little besides the name with traditional Cyclopes and has a "sociological" theme. My argument is comparable but more values connections with traditional myth and argues for a ethnographical theme.

5. Narratology: Cf. Calame 1995; De Jong 2001; Bakker 2013, 13-35.

ture of Polyphemus is functional within the structure of the story. Since Wilhelm Grimm the Polyphemus episode as been compared to folktales in which a violent cannibal is blinded.[6] The conventional term for the antagonist in these folktales is "ogre," derived from the Latin underworld deity "Orcus." [7] The use of comparative folktales in study of the Polyphemus episode has thus encouraged acceptance of the non-humanity of Polyphemus. The folktales typically feature a solitary antagonist with a single eye or a single working eye (though singularity of eyes is not required). As in the Polyphemus episode, the basic actions are sequential entrapment, cannibalism, blinding, and escape by means of herd animals. Further complications may follow; in one variant comparable to Odysseus' *Outis* ("nobody") trick, an antagonist's gift of a ring that cries out "here I am" reveals the escaping protagonist, who then cleverly employs it to kill the ogre.

The antagonist is a Cyclops n the Homeric version of this tale type, which many believe to be preHomeric.[8] Why is the antagonist a Cyclops? Cyclopes are large and powerful, and according to Zeus, Polyphemus is the most powerful of the Homeric Cyclopes (1. 70-71). The Greeks cannot physically defend themselves against Polyphemus. Crucially, they cannot move the boulder with which Polyphemus blocks the cave entrance (9. 240-243). The Homeric Polyphemus is also a Cyclops because one eye is easier to blind than two. The blinding of two eyes can occur in the folktales, but it is more efficient to blind a monophthalmic giant. Odysseus

6. The "Ogre Blinded (Polyphemus)," tale type 1137 in the Aarne-Thompson index (see Uther 2011 for the most recent revision). Frazer 1921 ii: 405-455 provides the most convenient collection of ogre folktales. Cf. Hansen 2002, 289-301; Csapo 2005, 57-67; Aguirre and Buxton 2020, 8-14 for discussion.

7. First used by Charles Perrault, who popularized the association of the ogre with fairy tales. The word is usually derived from Medieval French *ogre* ("fierce pagan" or "man-eating giant") and ultimately from Latin *Orcus*, an underworld deity (OED). Aguirre and Buxton 2020:4 suggest derivation from a dialect form of Italian *orco*, "demon" or "monster."

8. Cf. Bremmer 2002 for the argument that the tale type is ultimately derived from the Homeric episode. I am inclined to consider the tale type preHomeric in some form but on the whole I am agnostic about originary hypotheses for the Homeric episode.

never specifies that Polyphemus has one eye because he has need to do so— his designation of Polyphemus as a "Cyclops" signals the singularity of his eye as well as his strength.

Otherwise Polyphemus lacks Cyclopic characteristics that are of no thematic importance for this narrative. This Cyclops does not have Titanic lineage and does not make thunderbolts, build large walls, or work in a forge. He probably owns nothing made from metal, though the adverb concedes that there is much that Odysseus does not tell us (or does not know). Polyphemus somehow prepares his supper with a verb that usually refers to cutting (291), and he has somehow cut a olive wood stake (320).[9] Odysseus refers to metallurgy in a simile to describe the blinding (391-394); this and another simile featuring shipbuilding (384-386) may ironically comment on the Cyclops' lack of "civilized" technologies (Cook 1995: 93-110). We might wonder how exactly this shepherd even qualifies as Cyclops, but both Odysseus and the main narrator expect the audience to accept Polyphemus' Cyclopic status. Odysseus' audience, the Phaeacians, do not question the species of Polyphemus, though Odysseus' travel tales give Alcinous pause as well as delight (11. 363-369).

Why, we might also wonder, are there multiple Cyclopes in the Homeric episode, whereas Hesiod has three and the tale type usually features a single ogre? At a narrative level multiple Cyclopes are required for the famous name trick. Their narratological role is to hear the howls of pain, come to the cave, and ask if anyone is trying to kill Polyphemus. Odysseus sets up the joke with his general description of the Cyclopes as caring only for their families (114-115), as well claiming that Polyphemus did not associate with the other Cyclopes (187-189). The Cyclopes may ask after Polyphemus, but they do not bother to enter the cave. If they did, the Greeks would all die. When Polyphemus says that *Outis* is harming him, they understand him to mean that nobody is harming him, and so they abruptly

9. Most assume that Polyphemus eats his victims raw, employing fire only for light, but Burgess 2015, 127 supposes that he cooks his victims. See in general Aguirre and Buxton 2000, ch. 5 ("Lifestyle").

leave. Nothing Cyclopic is required for their role; it is their ethnographic lack of a cohesive polity that allows the name trick to unfold successfully.[10]

The causality of many aspects in the episode remain unclear. Why does Odysseus seek out the natives across the water from "Goat Island," where the Greeks harbored their ships? Bakker (2013: 22-23) compares the trip to the reconnaissance motif found in other episodes and suggests as motive Odysseus' desire for a guest-gift or the theft of the livestock. Though such motives fit the typological pattern of Propp's hero quest, they are not identified in the Homeric text as the hero's original motive for the trip. Odysseus only mentions guest gifts when already in the cave of Polyphemus (228-229), when rejecting his comrades' suggestion that they depart with cheese and sheep before the owner returns. In the end the Greeks do indeed rustle the livestock, but it is not a premeditated act. At "Goat Island" Odysseus and his men have fresh water and food (wild goats), so nourishment is not a pressing issue anyway. A more likely motive would be to seek help with getting home, which Odysseus requests from Polyphemus when offering wine (349-350. Polyphemus later duplicitously offers *πομπή* ("conveyance," including advice and means) to Odysseus after he has escaped (9. 518).[11] But the request for *pompe* also arises only after arrival in the cave, and is not announced as a motive before embarking.

In the popular imagination, the travels of Odysseus are thought to be motivated by a desire for adventure, which is indeed common in the comparative "ogre" folktales.[12] The Homeric Odysseus instead usually emphasizes his frustration with delayed, centrifugal wandering. But a pre-Homeric and traditional portrayal of an adventuresome Odysseus can be perceived occasionally, as in the Sirens episode. It would seem to appear

10. Puchner 2020, 28-34 interestingly discusses the episode from an environmental perspective, but oddly concludes from this scene that this is "a community that rallies immediately to defend one of its members" (31).

11. The *pompe* theme is prominent in the wanderings. See Burgess 2012, 76-280; Loney 2019, with remarks on this scene at 45-46.

12. See Calame 1995, 151-154 on this and other motivations for a "predicate-object."

in our episode when the hero explicitly announces his motive for crossing from "Goat Island" to a land where smoke is seen and livestock heard (167). Gathering his comrades, he announces that he intends to "test" the natives: (172-176):

> *ἄλλοι μὲν νῦν μίμνετ', ἐμοὶ ἐρίηρες ἑταῖροι:*
> *αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ σὺν νηΐ τ' ἐμῇ καὶ ἐμοῖς ἑτάροισιν*
> *ἐλθὼν τῶν δ' ἀνδρῶν πειρήσομαι, οἵ τινές εἰσιν,*
> *ἦ ῥ' οἵ γ' ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι,*
> *ἦε φιλόξεινοι, καί σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεουδής.*
>
> *You others now remain, my trusty companions, but I departing with my ship and my comrades will test these men, whoever they are, whether they are hubristic and uncivilized and unjust, or hospitable with a god-respecting mind.*

Elsewhere in the poem Odysseus wonders whether he has landed at a place of good or bad peoples, as is discussed further below. What is unique to this example is the linkage with testing. Testing becomes a major theme of the episode. When Polyphemus sounds out our hero about the location of his ship, Odysseus recognizes that he is being tested (9. 281). Odysseus in turn proceeds to test his antagonist.[13] Polyphemus will turn out to be one of the "hubristic and uncivilized and not just" type, not the "hospitable with good-respecting minds" type.

Much in the episode remains unclear. For example, many suppose that Odysseus provides strong Maronian wine to Polyphemus to weaken his defenses, or perhaps make him more susceptible to the *Outis* ("nobody") name trick.[14] The former is never made explicit, though Odysseus

13. Cf. Aguirre and Buxton 2020, 171-174 on the social game being played is that of host/stranger "games of hosting." From different perspective, Rosen 2007:117-171 well articulates the mutual competitiveness of Odysseus and Polyphemus.

14. See Bakker 2013, 22-23 for Proppian analysis of the wine as "magical agent" provided by Maron as a "donor." It is sometimes thought that the presence of wine in early Greek

does claim in hindsight that he brought the wine (and food) because he sensed he would meet a strong, lawless man (213-214), and Polyphemus in hind-blindness claims that the wine helped the Greeks attack him (454, 516). The latter can also be challenged; the day after the blinding Polyphemus still calls Odysseus *Outis* (455, 460). Odysseus also tells Polyphemus that he brought the wine as a "libation", apparently flattering his host's conceit that the Cyclopes are better than the gods (276).

In the end the wine becomes an object of discussion about guest exchange (Podlecki 1961) and linked as well to the Odyssean *pompe* ("send-off") theme discussed further below. Once in the cave Odysseus insists on staying so as to receive a guest gift (228-229), and both Odysseus and Polyphemus (deceptively) speak of the wine as a component of guest/host *xeina* (cf. 355-370). Odysseus' motive for visiting may not be gift exchange, but the development of the idea assumes that Polyphemus operates, if poorly so, within the conventions of human (Greek) culture. If functionally the wine serves as a weapon, thematically it is understood by both characters to be part of a shared, if differently respected, cultural practice. Polyphemus knows about gift exchange just as he knows about ships, pirates, and merchants (252-255; 279-280). Here as elsewhere Polyphemus acts like a human; Odysseus treats him as one, if without the norms of civilization.

A close reading of the Polyphemus episode suggests that Odysseus' antagonist is narratologically Cyclopic but thematically human. Besides measuring the culture of the Cyclopes and the livelihood of Polyphemus by Greek standards, Odysseus tests his host ethically and engages with him in gift exchange. All this serves the major impulse of the episode, which is ethnographic, and ethnocentric as well (Garland 1995, 91-94). But to explore the ethnography of the Polyphemus episode, we must first establish the human nature of Polyphemus.

iconography indicates reception of the Homer. My preference is to suppose that there were relevant preHomeric folktales, but that these were multiform, not ur-form.

The Humanity of Polyphemus

There are immediate objections to my claim that Polyphemus is a human. How can he be a human if Cyclopes in Greek myth were always (almost) immortal?[15] Polyphemus in Homer indeed has immortal parents, Poseidon and the sea nymph Thoosa. This is unusual lineage for a Cyclops, but it is divine parentage. And Thoosa belongs in the Pontid family, in which abound monsters in the usual sense of the word, like her siblings Scylla, Echidna, and the Gorgons.[16] If the question of the species of Polyphemus depends solely on his lineage, as provided or implied by the *Odyssey*, we would have to conclude that he is not only immortal but also a monster.[17]

That is only logical, with a stress on "only." It is now time to bring forth two key witnesses for establishing the human nature of Polyphemus: Homer and Odysseus. Both the main narrator and Odysseus as character-narrator specifically categorize the Cyclopes as humans. In the beginning of Book 6 (5) Homer uses the term *aner*, 'man, or human,' to describe the Cyclopes.[18] And Odysseus and his companions refer to Polyphemus with the same term in Book 9 (187, 494, as well as in naive anticipation of meeting humans at 174, as discussed above). The Homeric Cyclopes are certainly marked as unusual in behavior, with Homer using the term *ὑπερήνωρ* (6.5), which is commonly translated as "overbearing" —though let us note that etymologically it means "hyper-manly." The Homeric description of the Cyclopes is harmonious with Odysseus' ethical testing of the Cyclopes, as well as Polyphemus' knowledge (and perverse practice) of human cultural practices like *xenia* (Hutchinson 2007, 25). More relevant to the question of species is Od-

15. See Aguirre and Buxton 2020: 175-181-193 for variant ancient conceptions of the species of Cyclopes. The Cyclopes are not human in Euripides' *Cyclops* (115-118; 231).

16. *Theogony* 270-336; see Clay 1993.

17. For the related question of the species of the Laestrygonians and Giants, see Garviea 1994, 82; Aronen 2002; Peigney 2003, 38-41. The Phaeacians associate themselves with the Cyclopes with the giants at 6.4-8, 7.56-66, 205-6.

18. Cf. Apollodorus (*Epit.* 7. 4), who calls Polyphemus *ἀνὴρ ὑπερμεγέθης ἄγριος ἀνδροφάγος*.

ysseus' characterization of Polyphemus as a *πελώριος* (187) and *ἄγριος* (9. 494) human. The adjective *pelorios* sometimes has teratological connnotations, while the adjective *agrios*, literally "of the field," suggests "uncivilized" or "wild" (cf. Odysseus' use of the term in his typological binary of peoples).

Though a negative term, *agrios* is harmonious with the anthropological theme of the Polyphemus episode. Odysseus proleptically introduces the episode with an introductory excursus on Cyclopic culture. He adopts a omniscient tone to describe what the Cyclopes lack. From one ancient perspective, automatic production of food by food and absence of ships and trade are Golden Age characteristics (cf. *Works and Days* 109-120). But Odysseus is appalled at their lack of what his culture considers civilization. Describing the lush nature of "Goat Island" with the eye of a settler, he imagines how it could support a colony, agriculture, and marine trade (9. 122-136). As it is, Odysseus point out, the island has no flocks and no cultivated crops or ships, despite the presence of nice pastures, fresh water, and an excellent harbor. Odysseus claims that *if* the Cyclopes had carpenters to make ships they could reach this island, colonize it, and then also engage in mercantile voyages to other lands of humans. This hypothetical scenario assumes that the Cyclopes are humans who with the proper technology could visit fellow humans.

But terms like *pelorios* in the Polyphemus episode have encouraged the belief that Polyphemus is a "monster." The Greek word *τέρας* is key root of "teratology," the study of fantastic creatures or "monsters"(or in the biological world,the study of physical abnormalities).[19] The word "monster" itself is derived from the Latin *monstrum*, employed to describe Polyphemus at *Aeneid* 3. 658). *Monstrum* itself shares the root in *monstrare*, 'to show' and *monere*, "to warn." Unusual natural occurrences were thought to signal a warning from the gods. In Roman culture, an abnormal animal or human birth— for example, extra or missing body parts —was consid-

19. On teratological terminology, see Garland 1995, 141-158; Lenfant 1999; Felton 2013; Pizzani 2000; Gartziou-Tatti and Zografou, 2017.

ered a portent. A key text is Book 7 of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* on the types of humans. Pliny not only discusses abnormal births as *monstra*, but also unusually formed human peoples, as reported in myth or exotic ethnography (for example, dog-headed peoples).[20] The connection for Pliny is that both the genetically abnormal and exotic peoples would have forms that deviated from standard human morphology. There is a major distinction, however: whereas an abnormal birth usually differs from its parents, the exotic peoples do not differ from generation to generation.[21]

It is only in this respect that Polyphemus – and perhaps his fellow Cyclopes, though their lineage is not specified – differs from the so-called "Plinian Races" (whom I will call the Plinian humans). He is not like his father and mother. I would revert to narratology, however, to explain why Poseidon is his father. Divinity is not implied by this lineage. The blinding of a son of Poseidon narratologically serves the causality for a larger plot: Polyphemus complains to his father, and Poseidon delays the wanderings of Odysseus. Otherwise, the Homeric Cyclopes seem like Plinian humans. They are not one-off beings of idiosyncratic appearance, even if Polyphemus does not look like his parents, but rather a human tribe with a shared anomalous shape.

The Plinian humans remained influential down into the Middle Ages. In origin they go far back in Greek culture.[22] Peripheral peoples of unusual form are found in Herodotus, notably in his report of Aristeas' claims about unusual peoples north of the Black Sea, such as the the one-eyed Arimaspi and gold-guarding Griffins (4. 13). Ctesias, some decades later, reported various fabulous humans and creatures in the Far East (Nichols 2011). The expedition of Alexander the Great would also inspire narratives of fabulous creatures and humans of the east, notably in the *Alexander Ro-*

20. See Beagon 2005; Gevaert and Laes 2013; Felton 2013, 118-128.

21. See Lenfant 1999; the basic distinction is made at Aristotle *Gen. an*. 767b (see Sowa 2016).

22. See Wittower 1943; Friedman 198,15-27; Cambell 1988:87-121; Peigney 2003; Beagon 2005; Gavaert and Kaes 2013; Davies 2016.

mance, which along with the fanciful travel tale of Mandeville popularized the Plinian humans in the Medieval period. Such ethnographic descriptions of humans of unusual form remind us of mythological beings of hybrid parts or with a lack or excess of body parts. For example, the Arimaspi in Herodotus Book 4, like the Cyclopes, have a single eye.

But one distinction can be made between the Plinian humans and the Homeric Cyclopes. The Plinian humans are supposed to exist contemporaneously, if peripherally, with humans of regular morphology, whereas hybrid monsters of myth for example, Centaurs and Gorgons lived in the past of the Heroic Age. This is of course the age in which Odysseus lives. In the Polyphemus episode he encounters exotic humans who happen not to be present in the world known to Homer's original audiences, even if they were eventually localized on the map.

Teras is usually considered the Greek term most comparable to *monstrum*, for it often refers to an unusual thing or event that may signal some supernatural meaning. In Homer it is often designates a portent, like a star seen by sailors or an army at *Iliad* 4. 75-77. Seemingly related is the Greek word *πέλωρ* and its bi-form *πέλωρον* and the bi-form adjectives *πελώριος* and *πέλωρος*. I would emphasize the affective rather than deictic aspect of these *pelor* words, and to some degree *teras* as well. Whereas *monstrum* and *teras* might describe an unusual being or thing that serves as a portent, the *pelor* lexical family emphasizes an emotional or psychological reaction to something observed. But admittedly there is lots of ambiguity and slippage involved with these terms.

The *pelor* terms can be associated with what we might call a monster in our common sense of the word, as in the case of the Scylla (12. 87, notably modified by *κακός*, or the Gorgon head that Odysseus fears Persephone will send forth (11. 634). As for Polyphemus, Odysseus describes him as *pelorios* (187, 190) and *peloros* (257), and a *pelor* (428). One can see why *LSJ* describes *pelor* thusly: "in early writers always of living beings, mostly in bad sense, as of the Cyclops." And it is true that Odysseus characterizes Polyphemus as a *pelor* that is *ἀθεμίστια εἰδώς* ("knowing improper things;" 189).

But a bad "living being" is not necessarily a non-human monster. Certainly *pelorios* in reference to Hades and Ares does not refer to monsters (*Il.* 5. 395, 7. 208). In *Iliad* 18. 410, the sympathetic Hephaestus is deemed a *pelor*. One might wonder if this references his disability, but the context suggests rather his strength. Surely this is the meaning of *pelorios* when applied to heroes (e.g., Hector, *Il.* 11. 820; Achilles, *Il.* 21. 527; and Orion, *Od.* 11. 572). *Pelorios* can also refer to remarkable things (e.g., a spear, *Il.* 8. 424; armor, 10. 439; the boulder of Sisyphus, *Od.* 11. 593) or animals (e.g., the stag at *Od.* 10. 168). The *pelor* lexical family certainly *may* be employed within a negative context, but it seems that the terms do not denote anything bad exclusively. The referent might be to what is supernatural, or large and strong, or just unusual enough to inspire notice. Many examples of the *pelor* terms indicate the *affective* result of what is seen, often amplified by key terms of wonder like *δεῖνος* or *θαῦμα*.

Occasionally *teras* and *pelor* terms are together in the same passage, providing some indications of their similarities in meaning. When Odysseus in *Iliad* Book 2 (301ff.) recalls a snake eating a bird and its fledglings, he deems the snake a *σῆμα*, "sign" (308) revealed by Zeus (318-319) and the gods. The Greeks marvel (320) as they gaze at the *pelora*, which are *deina,* 'wondrous' (321). Calchas promptly explains the meaning of this *teras* of Zeus (324). Again the *pelor* term seems to imply affective reaction whereas *teras* signals supernatural meaning through divine agency. There is no implication that the birds and the snake are monstrous; they are just prey and predator, even if the onlooking warriors find the events pitiable.

Similarly, the main implication of the use of *pelor* terms for Polyphemus is simply that he is large, to an astounding degree (a *thauma*: 190). Since he is large, he is strong, and so he can act in a predatory manner towards the Greeks. From hindsight Odysseus articulates his behavior with negative terminology. When calling Polyphemus *pelorios* he adds that he knows improper things (189), and when calling him *agrios* he specifies he does not know lawful things (215). In general he characterizes the Cyclopes from the start as "haughty" and "unjust" *ὑπερφιάλων ἀθεμίστων*; 9. 106).

Noted above was Odysseus' use of the adjective *agrios* in an ethno-

graphical sense "uncivilized."[23] At 9.494 the companions urge Odysseus not to provoke "wild" or "uncivilized" man (*τίπτ' ἐθέλεις ἐρεθιζέμεν ἄγριον ἄνδρα*); Athena in disguise at 1. 197-199 uses this adjective to describe (falsely) the men who hold Odysseus captive on an island.[24] At *Odyssey* 2 (219-220) Homer himself, when referring to the Cyclops killing and eating the son of Antiphus, deems him "wild" or "uncivilized."

It seems clear that the Odysseus and his companions consider Polyphemus to be a human, if an alarmingly unusual one. It has been thought that the hero's comment that Polyphemus was "like a mountain peak, and not like a man" (9. 191-2) implies that Odysseus does not think that Polyphemus is a human. Besides being contradicted by the textual evidence that I have provided, this is a fundamental misunderstanding of what a simile is. Odysseus no more means that Polyphemus is not a human by saying he was not *like* a man than he means that Polyphemus was actually a mountain because he was *like* a mountain. He employs the simile to indicate that he is an unusual human in his size. Odysseus also assumes that this child of divinities is mortal. That explains his initial impulse to kill Polyphemus with a sword, abandoned when he realizes that they would not be able to escape from the enclosed cave (200-305).

As M. L. West correctly wrote in his commentary on the *Theogony*, the Homeric Cyclopes are "a race of shepherds dwelling in the world of men… Homer's Cyclopes… are not gods, but uncivilized men."[25] To say with Vidal-Naquet that Odysseus meets nobody "strictly human" between the Lotus-Eaters and Calypso is a great exaggeration, even with the qual-

23. "Apollodorus 7.4: *ἀνὴρ ὑπερμεγέθης ἄγριος ἀνδροφάγος, ἔχων ἕνα ὀφθαλμὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου*.

24. Seemingly allusive to Calypso detaining Odysseus on her island (cf. Proteus' report of this to Menelaus at 4.455-458), but perhaps referencing the Cyclops episode as well.

25. West 1966, 207-208. Cf. Vidal-Naquetr 1995, 41 in reference to "quasi-ethnographical description of pastoral people (nonhumanity may be just a different sort of humanity: savages)." The strained phraseology perhaps expresses the paradoxical aspects of Odysseus' ethnography.

ification "strictly."[26] Odysseus certainly does encounter divinities (Aeolus, Circe, Calypso), dangerous natural phenomena (the Planctae, Charybdis), and one or two non-human monsters. As an amorphous hybrid of various beastly parts, Scylla is a monster in the common, modern sense of the word. So apparently are the Sirens, at least as ancient artists imagined them, though their form is not described in Homer. But the Lotus-eaters qualify only as typical examples of Greco-Roman monophagic ethnography. The Laestrygonians are apparently humans (and therefore cannibals); if they are said to be *like* giants, again the simile need not imply that they actually are giants. In any event, I see no reason to doubt the mortality of either the Phaeacians or the giants in Homer, despite the confusing spatial and genetic entanglement of the Cyclopes, Phaeacians, and Giants in Homer. The Laestrogynians, like the Cyclopes, are dangerously large and predatory humans; differently, they have a culture that would meet Odysseus' standards for civilization (a watering place, a polis, and government structure).

Plotting the Episode

The narration of the Polyphemus episode by Odysseus, as with all episodes in the wanderings, is well designed to please the internal audience of the Phaeacians, as Alcinous and Arete confirm during the *intermezzo*. Odysseus is as careful in plotting his narrative as he is in plotting an escape from the cave.[27] Besides employing good story-telling, Odysseus stresses such important Greek cultural phenomena as *xenia* and proper reverence for the Greek gods. Having impressed his hosts, he receives from them *pompe*, "conveyance" (13. 41), which will entail, besides taking him home, cloth-

26. Vidal-Naquet 1996, 39. Though I admire Vidal-Naquet's anthropological analysis of different types of resource acquisition in the wanderings, he misleadingly employs the generic adjective *ἀλφηστής* and the formula *σῖτον ἐδόντες* as signifiers of agriculture. Even discounting typological and metrical issues, the former is of disputed meaning and the latter phrase most literally means "eating grain" but often means just "eating food."

27. See Most 1985 for the programmatic message of wanderings.

ing, gold, gifts, and a send-off libation (13. 39; 13. 54-55). One is reminded of Odysseus' suggestion that wine as a libation to Polyphemus might be reciprocated by a send-off ("I brought it for you, if perhaps pitying me you might send me home;" 349-350). Polyphemus is more interested in the wine than in providing travel advice, but as the Greeks depart he (deviously) offers the hero a guest-gift and promises to put in a word to his father Poseidon to effect *pompe* (517-518). Odysseus is vicious in his mocking response; Polyphemus in turn asks Poseidon for a sort of anti-*pompe* for Odysseus (Loney 2019:43-46). But in the end the telling of the tale helps convince the Phaeacians, those master conveyers (7. 318-328), to take Odysseus home.

The hero's introductory ethnographical description of Cyclopic culture pretends to be omniscient, though Odysseus only met one Cyclops, Polyphemus. He hears other Cyclopes briefly outside the cave, but Odysseus has no reason to suspect that they have families, unlike Polyphemus. Odysseus has no first-hand knowledge as to whether the Cyclopes practice agriculture or not. His claim is that even without agriculture "all things grow unplowed and unsown, wheat, barley, and grapes that produce wine" (109-111). How wine can be produced automatically is not explained, though Polyphemus is quoted as confirming its uncultivated nature (357-359). Though Polyphemus states that Cyclopian wine is inferior to Odysseus' Maronian wine, the vanquishing of Polyphemus would make better sense if the Cyclopes had no experience of wine at all. On the basis of autopsy, Odysseus details the pastoralist activities of Polyphemus, which include the making of cheese, and observes Polyphemus consuming milk and human flesh. On the basis of the narrative, we do not know if the other Cyclopes are pastoralists, and if so, sedentary or transhumant ones (for all we know, the caves are seasonal shelters). On the whole Odysseus' ethnology of the Cyclopes lacks evidence and is often mystifying. I conclude that Odysseus has recourse to ethnographical tropes to contextualize his personal experience, as often is the case with travel narratives.

Odysseus' ethnographical description of the Cyclopes is consistent an-

cient ethnography of exotic humans.[28] Ancient ethnography often focused on the seeming oddity of a diet based on a single type of food, leading to ethnographic nomenclature such as "fish-eaters". Fascination with monotrophic cultures exists already in Homer, as for example the "Lotus-eaters." Even more comparable to the Homeric Cyclopes are the northern "Horse-milkers, drinkers of milk," observed by Zeus at the beginning of *Iliad* Book 13 (5-6). If the single eye of the "Cyclopes" had not been narratologically helpful, I suspect that the Homeric Cyclopes could have been called "sheep milk-drinkers," or "cheese-eaters." Or perhaps they would be called *anthropofagi*, human-eaters, a common term in ancient ethnography.

Odysseus seems to consider the Cyclopes unusual not for their monocularity but for their lack of a Greek *polis* culture. They therefore are portrayed as an exotic human tribe, not animals or "monsters." Though designating the Cyclopes as human, Odysseus without hesitation places them at a lower stage in a hierarchal construct of cultural and socio-economic worth. This is a progressive view of human socio-economic history, in which the Cyclopes are seen as deplorable exemplars of lower and presumably earlier form of human culture. Many ancients, notably Hesiod, had a regressive sense of human development. Ships, metals, and politics are thereby seen to produce war, greed, and political corruption. Living off the land in a horizontally organized society without political structure might thereby be described as Golden Age typology. Odysseus' general description of the Cyclopes is reminiscent of Hesiod's Golden Age, with its automatic food without agriculture, and livestock as well (*Works and Days* 109-120).

The typological binary of good and bad peoples (9. 174-176) employed Odysseus when he states his plan to test the Cyclopes seems like generalized, stereotypical ethnography with an ethical bent. The phraseology also

28. Cf. Lenfant 1999; Dougherty 2001; Scodel 2005; Dench 2011; Dorati 2011; Skinner 2012; Almagor and Skinner 2013; De Angelis 2018; Bosak-Schroeder 2020; Mitchell 2021.

appears elsewhere as a repeated theme in the *Odyssey*. Odysseus' use of the phraseology appears first in poem when he washes up on the shore of the Phaeacians (6. 119-121). Homer describes him then also wondering if the natives were hubristic, "wild," and unjust, or hospitable with a god-fearing mind. Alcinous prompts Odysseus to tell an ethnographic account of his travels by employing the same phraseology of good and bad people (8.572-576). The main narrator, Homer, again describes Odysseus using this phraseology when the hero wakes up on the shores of Ithaca in Book 13 and does not know where he is (13. 200-202). But it is only in Book 9 that Odysseus adds an intention to "test" the natives.

Here Odysseus, generally portrayed by Homer as long-suffering during the course of his homecoming, seems to revert to a traditional characterization of the curious, adventurous hero. The general public still thinks of Odysseus in this way, and reception of the *Odyssey* also routinely portrays Odysseus as a restless, adventuresome traveler (e.g. in Dante's *Inferno*, or in Tennyson's "Ulysses"). In my view, such reception is on to something, for we see flashes of the curious, adventuresome Odysseus here and there in the *Odyssey*, as when he goes out of his way to hear the song of the Sirens. But it is in the Polyphemus episode Odysseus most purposefully engages with natives, in the unfortunate manner of many historical examples of "first contact" between outsiders and the indigenous.

Both Bakker (2013: 13-35) and Calame (1995) note that the Polyphemus episode is just one episode embedded in a series of episodes. From structural points of view, they point out that the motive of a narrative may be inherent in its larger context. In different ways, they describe the return of Odysseus as *technically* an adventure narrative, with curiosity as an essential motive running throughout the episodes. The Homeric version of the *nostos* of Odysseus, featuring a suffering and homesick hero, tends to obscure this theme of adventure. This is wandering, not purposeful adventure, and the goal of reaching home is continually frustrated. Narratological and structural patterns cannot overwhelm this surface level of the Homeric narrative, even if a traditionally adventurous nature of Odysseus often pokes through the surface. The key result of the Polyphemus episode is Po-

seidon's anger at the blinding of his son, which serves the over-arching plot of the wanderings.

Having established that the Homeric Cyclopes are human, we must then label the behavior of Polyphemus as cannibalistic. In Herodotus, Scythians of the north, variously agricultural, pastoral, or nomadic, could indulge in cannibalistic behavior in various ways.[29] At least that is what is reported by Herodotus and others, though it has been suspected that the practice has been exaggerated down through the ages, whether out of imaginative anxiety or malicious "othering" (ARENS 1979; cf. BARKER and HULME 1998; GOLDMAN 1999). It is therefpore unsurprising that Odysseus' type of narrative, a personal ethnographic travel tale, features the trope of cannibal natives.

It is interesting that Polyphemus in turn wonders about the livelihood of his visitor, a question that is relevant to Odysseus' motive in visiting the Cyclopes. Are they perhaps merchants or raiders, the Cyclops asks? Though Odysseus' reply focuses on the sack of the Troy, piracy was their occupation in the first, Ciconian episode. It may be revealing that Odysseus adopts the persona of a pirate in one of his later lying tales (14. 429-359), which is not unsual in an Odyssean world where raiding and enslaving are accepted norms. I will note in passing that our word "pirate" is based on the Greek words with the root of the vocabulary of Odysseus' "testing" theme.

Conclusion

My paper began with a narratological analysis of the Polyphemus episode, then focused on the species of Homeric Cyclopes, which served to describe the episode more generally as an ethnographic travel tale. The narratological examination reveals the characteristics of Polyphemus that interest Odysseus: his size and strength. There is no emphasis his single eye, though

29. On nomads as a cultural concept, see SHAW 1982/83, who reads nomads (*nomades*) in reference to the Cyclopes at line 120 in the transmitted text, though *monades* is often a preferred (see SEAFORD *ad loc*.; AGUIRRE and BUXTON 2020, 117, 170).

physical anomalies often signal "otherness" in ethnographical travel tales. The single eye of Polyphemus is indicated by his status as a Cyclops and then is implicitly functional in the plot. As often stated, this is a contest between *βίη*, "force," and *μῆτις* "cleverness." Polyphemus traps and eats the Greeks because he can. Those that can be caught and eaten are prey, and those that can catch and eat others are predators. Odysseus as the clever protagonist uses technology (the wooden stake) and guile to blind his stronger antagonist and then escape.

The Polyphemus episode, like the ogre tale type, has a sequence of containment, cannibalism, blinding, and escape. Narratologically, this is Actor 1 and Actor 2 exchanging counter-ordeals, in the terminology of Calame (1995). Ethnographically, Odysseus' ethnographical discourse assumes that Polyphemus and the Cyclopes are humans. Besides designating the Cyclopes as humans, Odysseus like an ethnographer places them within his hierarchal construct of cultural and socio-economic worth. Cannibalism as an ethnographic trope fits readily into such a narrative. We have an adventurous hero surviving a dangerous encounter with natives, fleeing not just with sheep but with ethnographic material to work up into a travel tale.

Ancient travel tales often feature wondrous events, sometimes humans of anomalous shape. But for Odysseus it is not the anomalous single eye of the Cyclops – this he ignores -- that is wondrous. Rather it is amazing display of force by Polyphemus, who as a large and strong predator reduces the Greeks to prey.[30] In a sense the Cyclops is a human who dehumanizes his victims. Recall the one passage in Homer that contains both, the *pelor* and *teras* terms, the omen at Aulis in *Iliad* Book 2. A snake consumes a bird and her nestlings. The onlooking Greeks were amazed the wondrous sight of a predator eating prey. What causes Odysseus to wonder at the *pelorios* Polyphemus is his size and violence, unruled by Greek cultural values. Using his mental acuity, and Greek cultural values, our hero es-

30. Clare 2000:11 somewhat differently states that Odysseus focuses on Polyphemus' odd persona rather than his odd appearance.

capes his role as prey and overcomes the predatory force of Polyphemus. The deep narratological theme is thus predator/prey, with role reversal the deep action. In the end Odysseus lives to tell the travel tale, which typically for travel narratives on its surface level pursues an ethnographical thesis: the Homeric Cyclopes are uncivilized humans.

A noticeable aspect of the episode is its inherent resistance to clarity and consistency, as my analysis has repeatedly emphasized. Somehow Polyphemus is the child of divinities yet human. Odysseus brings along strong wine for Polyphemus but its function is not clear. The general ethnographical description of the Cyclopes is not based on autoptic evidence, and in many ways Polyphemus is unrepresentative of his fellow Cyclopes. *Et cetera*. In my analysis, the curiosity of the hero is ethnographical. Odysseus' general, sweeping, description of the Cyclopes emphasizes what they lack. Odysseus' ethnography is not just amateurish but ethnocentric.

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SKYLLA. FEMALE, CHILDISH, MONSTROUS

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus cannot avoid crossing the strait of Scylla and Charybdis. The text does not admit any alternative route, involving, say, sailing round a land or island even at the cost of making the journey longer, that might allow Odysseus' ship to avoid the perilous strait. Circe's warning to Odysseus gives him two mutually exclusive possibilities: either crossing the strait of Skylla or attempting something that only Jason, helped by Hera, ever achieved before, sailing through the Plagktai (12. 55-72):

αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ τάς γε παρὲξ ἐλάσωσιν ἑταῖροι,
ἔνθα τοι οὐκέτ' ἔπειτα διηνεκέως ἀγορεύσω,
ὁπποτέρη δή τοι ὁδὸς ἔσσεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς
θυμῷ βουλεύειν: ἐρέω δέ τοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν.
ἔνθεν μὲν γὰρ πέτραι ἐπηρεφέες, προτὶ δ' αὐτὰς
κῦμα μέγα ῥοχθεῖ κυανώπιδος Ἀμφιτρίτης.
Πλαγκτὰς δή τοι τάς γε θεοὶ μάκαρες καλέουσι.
τῇ μέν τ' οὐδὲ ποτητὰ παρέρχεται οὐδὲ πέλειαι
τρήρωνες, ταί τ' ἀμβροσίην Διὶ πατρὶ φέρουσιν,
ἀλλά τε καὶ τῶν αἰὲν ἀφαιρεῖται λὶς πέτρη.
ἀλλ' ἄλλην ἐνίησι πατὴρ ἐναρίθμιον εἶναι.
τῇ δ' οὔ πώ τις νηῦς φύγεν ἀνδρῶν, ἥ τις ἵκηται,
ἀλλά θ' ὁμοῦ πίνακάς τε νεῶν καὶ σώματα φωτῶν
κύμαθ' ἁλὸς φορέουσι πυρός τ' ὀλοοῖο θύελλαι.
οἴη δὴ κείνη γε παρέπλω ποντοπόρος νηῦς,
Ἀργὼ πασιμέλουσα, παρ' Αἰήταο πλέουσα.
καὶ νύ κε τὴν ἔνθ' ὦκα βάλεν μεγάλας ποτὶ πέτρας,
ἀλλ' Ἥρη παρέπεμψεν, ἐπεὶ φίλος ἦεν Ἰήσων.

But when thy comrades shall have rowed past these, thereafter I shall not fully say on which side thy course is to lie, but do thou thyself ponder it in mind, and I will tell thee of both ways. For on the one hand are beetling crags, and against them [60] *roars the great wave of dark-eyed Amphitrite; the Planctai do the blessed gods call these. Thereby not even winged things may pass, no, not the timorous doves that bear ambrosia to father Zeus, but the smooth rock ever snatches away one even of these,* [65] *and the father sends in another to make up the tale. And thereby has no ship of men ever yet escaped that has come thither, but the planks of ships and bodies of men are whirled confusedly by the waves of the sea and the blasts of baneful fire. One seafaring ship alone has passed thereby,* [70] *that Argo famed of all, on her voyage from Aeetes, and even her the wave would speedily have dashed there against the great crags, had not Here sent her through, for that Jason was dear to her.* (trans. A. Murray)

It has often ben stated that the poet of the *Odyssey* had probably in mind one (or more than one) epic poem(s) relating to the journey of the Argonauts and it is interesting to notice that in the Odyssean mention of the Argo, chronologically the first surviving mention in literature, the theme of the dove already makes an entrance,[1] although it is hard to say in what form this theme could have been included in the pre-Homeric version.[2] In Archaic epic, however, there is a tendency to depict each heroic accomplishment as unique; when a repetition of a deed occurs it is usually narrated as a variant version. If the hero of the Argonautic epic managed to cross safely the Plagktai, then the hero of the *Odyssey* could not restrict himself

1. *Not even winged things may pass, no, not the timorous doves that bear ambrosia to father Zeus, but the smooth rock ever snatches away one even of these, and the father sends in another to make up the tale.*

In most post-Homeric versions of the story, Jason sends a dove to go up the strait and once the dove reaches the other end of the strait having lost only some feathers of its tail, then the Argo crosses successfully the strait at the sole cost of its stern's decoration.

2. Mainly since Meuli 1974 (1921). See also Gresseth 1970; Hopman 2012, 21-88. On the relation between *ἐπηρεφέες, πλαγκταί* and *συμπληγάδες*, see Christopoulos 1997, 52-56.

to a deed already achieved by someone else. But for the same reason, Odysseus' ship must also sail through a strait, through two rocks pregnant with different types of danger. However, navigating a strait is all Odysseus has in common with Jason. After this, things diverge: Jason's navigating the Clashing Rocks cost him merely the decoration on the stern of his ship. Odysseus' passage through the strait of Skylla costs him the life of six valiant companions. Here lies perhaps one of the major differences between Jason's ship and Odysseus'. In the Argonautic epic, the stress is laid on the ship. In the *Odyssey*, the stress is laid on the man. Argo, the *πασιμέλουσα*, is destined to reach Aietes' land and then come safely back to the port of Iolkos, whence she sailed. Odysseus' ship, on the other hand, is destined to sink, as are all his other ships. When he passes through the straits of Skylla for a second time, he has already lost his last ship. Odysseus' unnamed ship will never become πασιμέλουσα. He has no other choice than to become himself *πᾶσι μέλων*, and that is how, as we know, he will introduce himself to the Pheacians in 9. 19-20:

εἴμ' Ὀδυσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὅς πᾶσι δόλοισιν
ἀνθρώποισι μέλω, καί μευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει.

I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, who am known among men for all manner of wiles, and my fame reaches unto heaven. (Trans. A. Murray)

When Circe gives Odysseus information on his impending journey, she describes in detail the strait of Skylla. How is this information delivered to Odysseus and how to the audience?

Apart from the departure from Calypso's island and the arrival to the island of the Pheacians, all the adventures that Odysseus experiences on to his trip to Ithaca are revealed through, and included in, his own personal narrative. In all these stories, whether true or false, it is always Odysseus' own words that we hear.[3] Of all these stories, the greater part is of

3. The only exception lies in the lines 306-343 of Book 23, where the poet lists (as an external narrator) the adventures that Odysseus narrates to Penelope, adventures which, how-

course included in the four books of the *Apologoi* (Books 9-12) and, in spite of the bibliographical popularity of these books in Homeric scholarship, the function and the significance of the voice in these adventures does not seem to be exhaustively analyzed. Still, the voice is the sole stable element unifying all these different stories. It becomes the acoustic pathway to our visualization of what otherwise would had remained invisible. It allows the present to see the past. In order to reenact manifold episodes from this past, in Books 9-12 Odysseus lends his voice[4] to Polyphemus, the Cyclops, his companions, Aeolus and his family, Polites, Eurylochus, Hermes, Circe, Elpenor, Teiresias, Antikleia, Poseidon, Agamemnon, Achilles, Sirens, Helios and Zeus. The words of all these figures are registered verbatim. To this list of individuals one should also add all the other persons whose words are not cited but which Odysseus states that he heard. As a narrative technique, this scheme can theoretically be endlessly multiplied: Someone's words containing someone else's words containing someone else's words and so on. Pucci and Segal are among those who long ago noticed the latent comparison between Demodocus' song and Odysseus' narrative and this, of course, further illustrates the significance of the voice in these Odysseus' stories.[5] Odysseus tells Demodocus that he described things as well as if he himself had attended or if he had been told by someone else (8. 491). These two possibilities, self-attending or learning from someone else, are both on display in the *Apologoi*. The places and the facts included in Circe's directions to Odysseus (10. 504-540, 12. 36-141) are displayed twice: first, depicted in Circe's information, and then through the lens of Odysseus' own experience. This twofold presentation applies to the Skylla episode too. Skylla's description echoes Circe's voice, as narrated by Odysseus' (and of course through the singer's) voice.

ever, have been made known to the audience previously through Odysseus' personal narrative. Homer thus indirectly confirms the compatibility of Odysseus' stories with his own.

4. Through the singer's voice, which is potentially different in each performance.

5. Pucci 1987; Segal 1994.

οἱ δὲ δύω σκόπελοι ὁ μὲν οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἱκάνει
ὀξείῃ κορυφῇ, νεφέλη δέ μιν ἀμφιβέβηκε
κυανέη: τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτ' ἐρωεῖ, οὐδέ ποτ' αἴθρη
κείνου ἔχει κορυφὴν οὔτ' ἐν θέρει οὔτ' ἐν ὀπώρῃ.
οὐδέ κεν ἀμβαίη βροτὸς ἀνὴρ οὐδ' ἐπιβαίη,
οὐδ' εἴ οἱ χεῖρές τε ἐείκοσι καὶ πόδες εἶεν:
πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι, περιξεστῇ ἐικυῖα.
μέσσῳ δ' ἐν σκοπέλῳ ἔστι σπέος ἠεροειδές,
πρὸς ζόφον εἰς Ἔρεβος τετραμμένον, ᾗ περ ἂν ὑμεῖς
νῆα παρὰ γλαφυρὴν ἰθύνετε, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ.
οὐδέ κεν ἐκ νηὸς γλαφυρῆς αἰζήιος ἀνὴρ
τόξῳ ὀιστεύσας κοῖλον σπέος εἰσαφίκοιτο.
ἔνθα δ' ἐνὶ Σκύλλη ναίει δεινὸν λελακυῖα.
τῆς ἦ τοι φωνὴ μὲν ὅση σκύλακος νεογιλῆς
γίγνεται, αὐτὴ δ' αὖτε πέλωρ κακόν: οὐδέ κέ τίς μιν
γηθήσειεν ἰδών, οὐδ' εἰ θεὸς ἀντιάσειεν.
τῆς ἦ τοι πόδες εἰσὶ δυώδεκα πάντες ἄωροι,
ἓξ δέ τέ οἱ δειραὶ περιμήκees, ἐν δὲ ἑκάστῃ
σμερδαλέη κεφαλή, ἐν δὲ τρίστοιχοι ὀδόντες
πυκνοὶ καὶ θαμέες, πλεῖοι μέλανος θανάτοιο.
μέσση μέν τε κατὰ σπείους κοίλοιο δέδυκεν,
ἔξω δ' ἐξίσχει κεφαλὰς δεινοῖο βερέθρου,
αὐτοῦ δ' ἰχθυάᾳ, σκόπελον περιμαιμώωσα,
δελφῖνάς τε κύνας τε, καὶ εἴ ποθι μεῖζον ἕλῃσι
κῆτος, ἃ μυρία βόσκει ἀγάστονος Ἀμφιτρίτη.
τῇ δ' οὔ πώ ποτε ναῦται ἀκήριοι εὐχετόωνται
παρφυγέειν σὺν νηί: φέρει δέ τε κρατὶ ἑκάστῳ
φῶτ' ἐξαρπάξασα νεὸς κυανοπρῴροιο.

Now on the other path are two cliffs, one of which reaches with its sharp peak to the broad heaven, and a dark cloud surrounds it. [75] *This never melts away, nor does clear sky ever surround that peak in summer or in harvest time. No mortal man could scale it or set foot upon the top,*

not though he had twenty hands and feet; for the rock is smooth, as if it were polished. [80] *And in the midst of the cliff is a dim cave, turned to the West, toward Erebus, even where you shall steer your hollow ship, glorious Odysseus. Not even a man of might could shoot an arrow from the hollow ship so as to reach into that vaulted cave.* [85] *Therein dwells Scylla, yelping terribly. Her voice is indeed but as the voice of a new-born whelp, but she herself is an evil monster, nor would anyone be glad at sight of her, no, not though it were a god that met her. Verily she has twelve feet, all misshapen,* [90] *and six necks, exceeding long, and on each one an awful head, and therein three rows of teeth, thick and close, and full of black death. Up to her middle she is hidden in the hollow cave, but she holds her head out beyond the dread chasm,* [95] *and fishes there, eagerly searching around the rock for dolphins and sea-dogs and whatever greater beast she may haply catch, such creatures as deep-moaning Amphitrite rears in multitudes past counting. By her no sailors yet may boast that they have fled unscathed in their ship, for with each head she carries off* [100] *a man, snatching him from the dark-prowed ship.*

(trans. A.T. Murray)

In this description there is yet a third voice that Odysseus will never be able to hear, the voice of Skylla herself. Her voice is, actually, the first thing we learn about her. It sounds like barking, as is to be expected from a creature whose name is so directly associated with the word "dog". It therefore lies outside the area covered by the nature of the human voice. This voice has also an age, that of a female puppy (*τῆς ἦ τοι φωνὴ μὲν ὅση σκύλακος νεογιλῆς*). This puzzled some ancient scholiasts who could not see how a puppy's voice can justify *δεινὸν λελακυῖα* (12. 85):

πῶς γὰρ ἡ δεινὸν λελακυῖα δύναται νεογνοῦ σκύλακος φωνὴν ἔχειν; (sch. *Od.* 12. 86).

But of course *δεινόν* could perfectly signify the ferocity and not the loudness of the barking[6] and although φωνὴ is, grammatically speaking, placed in the singular, the audience is completely entitled to imagine that Skylla has not only one voice but six, since, on the basis of such a description, she then possesses six heads, each one equipped with three rows of teeth. Consequently, each head could have possessed its own separate voice. We should, however, infer that, even if these voices are six, they all have the same features denoting the voice of a female puppy (or, ultimately, six female puppies); after all, it is hard to decide whether Skylla is one person with six heads or six persons with one body. Is Skylla an "I" or a "we"? It is more than certain that, whatever the number of the voices issuing from each one of Skylla's heads is, at the moment she attacks Odysseus' ship we also count, within this wild sound narrative panel, six more voices issuing from each one of Skylla's heads. But these voices do not come from her, they come from each one of Odysseus' six companions who scream, as they are devoured.

What is the factual and the narrative function of Skylla's voice in the story, if its sound is not meant to be perceived? First, one purpose is to juxtapose the tender picture that the sound evokes (a little puppy) with the monstrous reality (*πέλωρ κακόν*) it is part of. Then, such a voice (let us imagine there is only one), even if it could have been heard by some unsuspecting sailor (and future victim), would never worry him. The voice would sound perhaps less attractive than the voice of the Sirens but, at least, not threatening at all. When this voice of Skylla cannot be heard because of the noise created by Charybdis, as is the case in 12. 226-246, then it cannot reach Odysseus' ears and guide his eye, when, aware as he is, he tries vainly to make out Skylla hidden in her rock before she attacks.[7] Fi-

6. Cf. Eustathius sch.12. 85 *δεινόν…μεγεθύνει κατ' ἔννοιαν τὸ τῆς λέξεως ταπεινόν*. In Hesiod's *Theogony* 834 each one of Typhoeus' hundred heads possesses many voices, among them, the voice of a puppy.

7. Odysseus' use of weapons at this very moment, in spite of Circe's warning, is associated by Heubeck (*Commentary* on 12.226-235) with a kind of utopian epic heroism that

nally, the function of this voice is emphatically to ascribe Skylla not to one species, since she belongs to many species, but again to a gender, the female gender.

Of all figures appearing in the *Apologoi* that represent mortal danger to Odysseus, the wife (and the daughter) of Antiphates, Gorgo, the Sirens, Skylla and Charybdis are by definition female. This, however, is their only common point. With the exception of the Sirens, about whose physiology there is not a word in the *Odyssey*, of all the female creatures mentioned above, Gorgo, Charybdis and, mainly, Skylla, clearly do not have a human shape. Skylla's terrifying dimensions in particular bring her close to other terrifying female figures, such as Lamia, Empousa, Echidna, Hydra, Gorgo and Hecate, some of which are connected with her through parental relations in later genealogies (namely Lamia, Echidna and Hecate). In Homer, Skylla's genealogical origin is defined only by reference to her mother, Crataiis. But in the relevant passage in the *Odyssey*, Skylla is also an "immortal bane" (*ἀθάνατον κακόν*).[8] When Odysseus asks how he can defend himself against Skylla, Circe gives him a somewhat unexpected answer (12. 116-126):

σχέτλιε, καὶ δὴ αὖ τοι πολεμήια ἔργα μέμηλε
καὶ πόνος: οὐδὲ θεοῖσιν ὑπείξεαι ἀθανάτοισιν;
ἡ δέ τοι οὐ θνητή, ἀλλ' ἀθάνατον κακόν ἐστι,
δεινόν τ' ἀργαλέον τε καὶ ἄγριον οὐδὲ μαχητόν:

urges the hero to defend his companions. This concurs with Odysseus' aim, already declared at *Odyssey* 1. 5. Still, at the same time, there is a clear distinction between Odysseus and his companions throughout the *Odyssey* and this is particularly evident in the case of the Sirens, who come just before the strait of Skylla in the sequence of Odysseus' adventures. In view of the cruel realism that informs the Skylla episode, one should also recall that metallic objects, such as the two long spears on Odysseus would make him a less suitable piece of food for Skylla.

8. On Skylla's immortality in post-Homeric versions, see Lycophron *Alexandra*, 44-51. Skylla eats some of Gyreones' cows and Heracles kills her and tears her to pieces. Phorkys, Skylla's father, gathers up these pieces and brings his daughter back to life; so in this later version Skylla seems to be not exactly immortal, but rather resurrected.

οὐδέ τις ἔστ' ἀλκή: φυγέειν κάρτιστον ἀπ' αὐτῆς.
ἢν γὰρ δηθύνῃσθα κορυσσόμενος παρὰ πέτρῃ,
δείδω, μή σ' ἐξαῦτις ἐφορμηθεῖσα κίχῃσι
τόσσῃσιν κεφαλῇσι, τόσους δ' ἐκ φῶτας ἕληται.
ἀλλὰ μάλα σφοδρῶς ἐλάαν, βωστρεῖν δὲ Κράταιιν,
μητέρα τῆς Σκύλλης, ἥ μιν τέκε πῆμα βροτοῖσιν:
ἥ μιν ἔπειτ' ἀποπαύσει ἐς ὕστερον ὁρμηθῆναι.

Rash man, lo, now again thy heart is set on the deeds of war and on toil. Wilt thou not yield even to the immortal gods? She is not mortal, but an immortal bane, dread, and dire, and fierce, and not to be fought with; [120] *there is no defence; to flee from her is bravest. For if thou tarriest to arm thyself by the cliff, I fear lest she may again dart forth and attack thee with as many heads and seize as many men as before. Nay, row past with all thy might, and call upon Crataiis,* [125] *the mother of Scylla, who bore her for a bane to mortals. Then will she keep her from darting forth again.* (trans. by A. Murray)

Skylla is female, immortal and, above all, a dog. But *why* is she a dog here and not, for instance, serpent or polyp, as several vase paintings depict Skylla in the Hellenistic and Roman period?[9]

The picture of the dog in Homeric epics has been a favorite topic for scholars.[10] In Homer, a man is often characterized as a dog when he is worthy of scorn or hatred. This is what Achilles calls Hector (*κύον*) just before he kills him (*Il.* 22. 345) and what Odysseus calls the suitors (*κύνες*) when he slaughters them (*Od.* 22. 35). Women are characterized as κύνες when they are proved impudent and shameless.[11] This is how Iris, bearing Zeus' words, treats Athena, who is ready to disobey her own father (*Il.* 8. 423). Melantho, because of her behavior, is for Odysseus a typical

9. See Govers Hopman 2013, 173-263.

10. See, for example, Lilja 1976, Bonnafe' 1984, 104, 159 and passim, Beck 1991, Frano 2014, 17-53.

11. On this, see Frano 2014.

case of *κύων* (*Od*. 18. 338). And, of course, the most illustrious example is Helen, who characterizes herself as *κύνα* (*Il*. 6. 344) and *κυνῶπιν* (*Od*. 4. 145).[12] But cowardice, too, is a defect that typifies nasty (female) dogs and this is probably what Menelaus is referring to when he calls the Trojans *κακαί κύνες* on the battlefield (*Il*. 13. 623). As for the barking of a female dog, what makes it terrifying is perhaps the force that the animal reveals in making clear its intention to kill, especially when she is protecting her puppies. This is the case of the famous (and in several aspects dog-inspired) simile that compares Odysseus' heart to a female dog protecting her puppies, when the still-disguised hero sees the maids of his house going secretly out to sleep with the Suitors. He regains self-control as he recalls that he has already suffered much more "doggish" (*κύντερον*) trials than this one[13] (*Od*.20.9-20)

τοῦ δ' ὠρίνετο θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλοισι:
πολλὰ δὲ μερμήριζε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν,
ἠὲ μεταΐξας θάνατον τεύξειεν ἑκάστῃ,
ἦ ἔτ' ἐᾷ μνηστῆρσιν ὑπερφιάλοισι μιγῆναι
ὕστατα καὶ πύματα, κραδίη δέ οἱ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει.
ὡς δὲ κύων ἀμαλῇσι περὶ σκυλάκεσσι βεβῶσα
ἄνδρ' ἀγνοιήσασ' ὑλάει μέμονέν τε μάχεσθαι,
ὥς ῥα τοῦ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει ἀγαιομένου κακὰ ἔργα:
στῆθος δὲ πλήξας κραδίην ἠνίπαπε μύθῳ:
'τέτλαθι δή, κραδίη: καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης.
ἤματι τῷ ὅτε μοι μένος ἄσχετος ἤσθιε Κύκλωψ
ἰφθίμους ἑτάρους.

12. See Graver 1995.

13. It is of course impossible to mention all the instances of terrifying or dangerous women who are compared or associated with a "bitch" in post-Homeric literature. For example, there is Clytaimnestra, who is compared by Aeschylus to a *κύων* (*Agamemnon* 1228) and to *Σκύλλα* (*Agamemnon* 1233). There is also Hecate's sinister relationship with dogs and the Sphinx, called by Sophocles *ῥαψῳδὸς κύων* (*Oedipus Rex* 391).

But the heart was stirred in his breast, and much he debated in mind and heart, whether he should rush after them and deal death to each, or suffer them to lie with the insolent wooers for the last and latest time; and his heart growled within him. And as a bitch stands over her tender whelps growling, when she sees a man she does not know, and is eager to fight, so his heart growled within him in his wrath at their evil deeds; but he smote his breast, and rebuked his heart, saying: "Endure, my heart; a worse thing even than this didst thou once endure on that day when the Cyclops, unrestrained in daring, devoured my mighty comrades.

(trans. by A. Murray)

The picture of Skylla given by Circe is very detailed also because Scylla's terrifying characteristics could not have been visible at the moment of her speedy attack as Odysseus is crossing the strait. In fact, Odysseus and his crew will have the time to witness themselves what happens when Charybis sucks in the sea-water. Circe also makes clear that any attempt to fight Skylla is useless. She is a disaster on an immortal scale. Circe's advice to Odysseus is precise: *οὐδέ τις ἔστ' ἀλκή: φυγέειν κάρτιστον ἀπ' αὐτῆς*. The *ἀλκή*, defensive bravery, the manly virtue which leads to victory, is here totally useless. A hero does not fight Skylla, he avoids her, as he avoids Charybdis, the Sirens, Gorgo, as he also maintains his distance from Circe, from Calypso, even from Nausica, from all these variously dangerous female creatures. A hero does not fight a female evil. He sidesteps it.

Let us now examine some interesting hints relating to time and age in this episode. We have already commented on Skylla's voice, which resembles that of a *σκύλαξ νεογιλή*. Most ancient lexicographers understand *νεογιλή* to mean "newly born". For Hesychius it means *νεαρά, νέα, νεωστί γεννηθεῖσα*. An ancient scholion on 12.86 suggests a more specific interpretation: *γάλακτος τρεφομένης*.[14] P. Chantraine[15] associates it with the Mycenean "kira" (= little girl) and lith. "zindu" (= to nurse). If so, then the

14. Cf. Opp. *Κυν*. 1.199: *νεογιλόν ὀδόντα*.
15. Chantraine 1999.

mouth whence a *νεογιλή φωνή* emerges would be the mouth of a child fed on his mother's milk. We should then perhaps turn to another detail of this extraordinary description, one also associated with the notion of time: Skylla's twelve *ἄωροι πόδες*. Although a derivation from *ἀείρω* has been suggested (by Klassen), the most probable derivation remains from *ἀ+ώρη*, that is, 'not yet mature', 'too young', 'too small', a meaning that evokes a picture of atrophic limbs or the limbs of infants, which would explain Skylla's incapacity to search for her food away from her cave. This interpretation also sits well with this meaning of the word *νεογιλός*. And although the use of *νεογιλός* might lead us to believe that this creature receives food, in the form of milk, from her mother, to our surprise we then realise that this mother will intervene only to prohibit a second attack by her daughter. Where exactly this mother is located remains, to the disappointment of both ancient and modern commentators, unknown. In Odysseus' account of the episode, we have no mention of any appeal made to Kratais, in spite of Circe's suggestion. But Skylla's obedience to her mother is the only element linking this monster to any value current outside the realm of the monstrous. With this theme of maternal persuasion, then, we have another hint at the childishness already suggested by the use of *νεογιλός* and *ἄωρος*. And, of course, since we do not know much about Kratais,[16] one wonders whether this childish monster (or monstrous child) has eventually taken after her mother. As far as we know, Eustathius, in his Commentary on the *Odyssey*, was the first to wonder about the matter: *εἰ δὲ καὶ φίλη μήτηρ ὁμοία τῷ πολυκεφάλῳ ἀδίκῳ πρόσεστιν*.[17]

Thus motherhood is added to the narrative mythemes in this episode.

When mariners passing through the strait are not available, Skylla lives off sharks and dolphins. It is interesting to observe that in the next episode, the island of Thrinakia, Odysseus' companions, until now Skylla's prospective victims, are forced to adopt Skylla's culinary preferences and, in

16. She is identified with Ceto in post-Homeric sources. See Burgess 2017, 106, West 1995, 305-306.

17. See his comment on 12. 124.

an ironic inversion, practice fishing themselves, a non-heroic way of finding one's food, as we know[18] since laying hands on Helios' cows is strictly and repeatedly prohibited.[19] This prohibition is upheld by Phaethoussa and Lambetie, Helios' daughters, who have been assigned to this very task by their mother Neeaira, so that the cattle of Helios may remain imperishable. Thus ideas of food and of motherhood remain surprisingly active in both consecutive episodes, as does also the idea of time. All three pertain to this next stage of Odysseus' trip, that is, the island of Thrinakia, the phase that irrevocably separates Odysseus from his companions.

The shipwreck of Odysseus' last ship forms the end of the Thrinakia episode. Shipwrecked as he is, Odysseus is then brought, grasping his ship's mast, back to the strait of Scylla and Charybdis and, grasping the branches of the fig-tree, is saved from Charybdis.[20] Skylla will not see him this time, Skylla who is, therefore, the final monster that Odysseus escapes. Monsters will not appear any longer during his trip, as if monstrosity during his *nostos* were linked, in some strange way, to the existence of his companions. Odysseus is no longer the same man when he crosses Skylla's strait for the second time. The thunder that destroys his ship in *Od*. 12. 415, seals the most crucial point of his *nostos*, which is the moment that Odysseus finds his individuality. The first crossing of the strait of Skylla was, as things still were, a matter of "we". The second crossing is now a matter of "I", as it will be permanently thereafter.

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18. See Eustathius' comment on *Od*. 12. 252: *οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ προσώπῳ ἡρωικῷ τροφὴν ἐξ ἰχθύων διεσκεύασεν* (=Homer).

19. See Vernant 1979.

20. On the function of the mast, see Christopoulos 2017.

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ODYSSEUS AS A BAT: AN EXPERIENCE IN NARRATOLOGY

At the end of *Odyssey* 12, Odysseus is about to conclude the long narration of his adventures (the so-called *Apologue*). Even though he has not invoked any Muse and is not himself a singer, he fascinates his audience who listen to him with wonder. His narrative appears as a small *Odyssey* within the *Odyssey*. This oral performance is such that it may appear more impressive than the heroic feats it recounts. In the *Iliad*, the longest character's speech never exceeds 400 verses.[1] In contrast to this Iliadic limit, the poet of the *Odyssey* does not hesitate to lend his voice to his hero for a narration of nearly 2200 verses (books 9-12), a long tirade which is actually composed of two parts. After having recounted his wanderings through the seas since leaving Troy, his encounters with monstrous beings and nymphs of dangerous charm, Odysseus reaches the climax of his story, the visit to Hades where he meets the souls of Teiresias and his mother and sees the wives and daughters of past princes. At this point (after 1471 lines), he interrupts his tale: the night is upon them and with it time to sleep. But the queen and the king of the Phaeacians insist that he continue, even into the morning if necessary. Odysseus accepts and continues his telling; he narrates his interactions in the underworld with Agamemnon and Achilles, the spectacle of the punishments of great criminals, his encounter with Heracles' soul; then he tells of his return to Circe, the funeral of Elpenor, the spell of the Sirens, the path between the rocks of Charybdis and Scylla, the stay on the island of the sun cows where his companions committed the unholy sacrifice and finally the anger of Zeus who, in

1. See the website of D. Beck, https://homeric-speech-beck.la.utexas.edu/home (accessed 1.11.22). On Odysseus as a narrator, rival of the composer: Beck 2012, 152-3; Bouvier 2002a, 79-82, Bakker 2009.

a storm, struck Odysseus' ship with lightning. Odysseus is the only survivor of this shipwreck. This is the last part, the solitary part of his journey before he runs aground on Calypso's island. The Phaeacians already know everything that happened after his arrival and his stay with Calypso. The hero will not need to tell it again.[2] Let us listen then to how he recounts this final part of his tale, when the night is already very advanced. Zeus has destroyed the ship but the hero clings to the wreckage. The currents take him back to the Planktai, the wandering rocks, and more directly to Charybdis, which sucks down the black waters of the sea.[3] In order not to disappear drowned in the terrible ebb and flow (12.236), Odysseus finds the strength, as Charybdis sucks down the water, to swing himself up from his raft and cling to the branch of a large fig tree that grows on the reef. Describing the leap that saves him, the hero compares himself to a bat:

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ ποτὶ μακρὸν ἐρινεὸν ὑψόσ' ἀερθείς,
τῷ προσφὺς ἐχόμην ὡς νυκτερίς· οὐδέ πῃ εἶχον
οὔτε στηρίξαι ποσὶν ἔμπεδον οὔτ' ἐπιβῆναι·
ῥίζαι γὰρ ἑκὰς εἶχον, ἀπήωροι δ' ἔσαν ὄζοι
μακροί τε μεγάλοι τε, κατεσκίαον δὲ Χάρυβδιν.
νωλεμέως δ' ἐχόμην, ὄφρ' ἐξεμέσειεν ὀπίσσω
ἱστὸν καὶ τρόπιν αὖτις· ἐελδομένῳ δέ μοι ἦλθον,
ὄψ'· ἦμος δ' ἐπὶ δόρπον ἀνὴρ ἀγορῆθεν ἀνέστη
κρίνων νείκεα πολλὰ δικαζομένων αἰζηῶν,
τῆμος δὴ τά γε δοῦρα Χαρύβδιος ἐξεφαάνθη.

But I reached high in the air above me, to where the tall fig tree grew, and caught hold of it and clung like a bat (ὡς νυκτερίς); there was no place where I could firmly brace my feet, or climb up it, for the roots of it were far from me, and the branches hung out far, big and long branches that overshadowed Charybdis. Inexorably I hung on (νωλεμέως δ' ἐχόμην),

2. *Od*. 450-53; see Detienne 1981, 161
3. *Od*. 12.104. On this passage, see Hopman 2012.

> *waiting for her to vomit the keel and mast back up again. I longed for them, and they came late; at the time when a man leaves the law court, for dinner, after judging the many disputes brought him by litigious young men; that was the time it took the timbers to appear from Charybdis.*
>
> (*Od*. 12 432-441; trans. Richmond Lattimore).

This simile of Odysseus as bat has not received much attention from the commentators of the *Odyssey* and, as far as I have been able to check, I have not found any particular study devoted to it. However, I would like to demonstrate its great interest, on the narratological level and also because it will allow us to highlight an epithet qualifying Ulysses that nobody has ever really considered: Ulysses as a nocturnal hero. It is true that today, after the covid nightmare, bats have bad press. To enhance the value of our simile, let us first note that it belongs to a rather rare category in Homeric Poetry. Most academic works have tried to classify similes according to the different categories of *comparanda* (or tenors), of *comparata* (or vehicles) or according to the *tertium comparationis*. These are the criteria William Clyde Scott (1974) employs to classify which gods or heroes are compared to what (animal, natural phenomena, human activity, etc.) and in relation to which shared element.

Other works inspired by narratology have focused on other aspects, notably the frequency of similes and their motivation. Jonathan Ready (2011) compares similes made by the primary narrator and those made by the characters. New digital tools, like the "Homeric Similes. A Searchable and Interactive Database"[4] by John Ziolkowski, Robert Farber and Denis Sullivan, allow us to perceive important and fundamental differences between the use of comparisons in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*. For example, in the *Iliad*, only 19% of the comparisons are formulated in a characters' speech against 81% by the narrator; in the *Odyssey* this proportion tends to be reversed and 62% of the comparisons are formulated by characters against

4. https://terpconnect.umd.edu/~sullivan/SimileSearchR3.html (accessed 1.11.22).

38% by the narrator. Odysseus is of course the hero who formulates the greatest number of comparisons or metaphors: the database by Ziolkowski *et alii* counts 37. Of these 37 comparisons, the one with the bat is the only one in which Odysseus looks at himself. In the *Iliad*, characters such as Achilles, Aeneas and Hector often look at themselves in the mirror of a comparison: Achilles compares himself to a bird, a shepherd or a lion; Aeneas and Hector fear being like a coward, a woman or a child. In the *Odyssey*, there is only one example of a hero projecting himself into a simile: Odysseus clinging to the fig tree and identifying himself as a bat. It is always interesting to look at examples that are unique.

The simile is perfectly adapted to the situation. Hanging from the branch where he will remain until the end of the day, Odysseus is like those bats who hang from branches or rocks, waiting for nightfall to act and hunt. But since Odysseus himself imagines this comparison, we can ask whether the relation between the multi face hero and the bat goes even deeper. At the end of his long speech to the Phaeacians, when it is crucial for him to fully win their trust and esteem –since only the Phaeacians can ensure his return to Ithaca–, the hero may have deeper reasons for identifying as a bat. Odysseus knows how to play with his identity, he masters his own image. If he associates his person with a bat, he certainly does so on purpose.

In ancient Greece, Aristoteles considered the bat a dualizing creature, between bird and mouse.[5] Named after the night (*νυκτερίς*), inhabiting dark caves where it has the habit of clinging by its legs to the rock, head downwards, body upside down, this mammal whose hands have become wings, is also known, in ancient Greece, for its dual nature, its double identity as a bird (but a bird without feathers) and a mouse (but a mouse with wings), a double identity revealed by his name in French «chauve-souris». Most likely, "chauve" is a deformation in Low Latin of a Gallo-Ro-

5. Arnott 2007, 150-152.

man word, *cawa* meaning «owl».[6] So the French name "chauve-souris" was originally «owl-mouse». In his *History of animals*, Aristotle associated the bat with the owl, for its nocturnal activity: "Some animals are nocturnal, as the owl and the bat" (*Καὶ τὰ μὲν νυκτερόβια, οἷον γλαύξ, νυκτερίς*, Arist. *HA* 488a26). But, he also knew about the existence of a bat variant called "flying fox": "Of animals that can fly some have feathered wings, as the eagle and the hawk; some have membranous wings, for example, the bee and the cockchafer, some have dermatous wings, for example, the flying-fox and the bat" (*Τῶν δὲ πτηνῶν τὰ μὲν πτερωτά ἐστιν, οἷον ἀετὸς καὶ ἱέραξ, τὰ δὲ πτιλωτά, οἷον μέλιττα καὶ μηλολόνθη, τὰ δὲ δερμόπτερα, οἷον ἀλώπηξ καὶ νυκτερίς*, Arist., *HA*, 490a8). In the Bestiary of the *Cyranides* (around the 4th century of our era), it is said that "the bat is a winged quadruped animal known to all. It moves like a swallow, gives birth and suckles like a quadruped" (*Νυκτερὶς ζῷόν ἐστιν τετράπουν πτερωτὸν πᾶσι γνωστόν. ἵπταται ὡς χελιδών, τίκτει δὲ ὡς τετράπουν καὶ θηλάζει*, Cyr., 2, 28, 2-3).[7]

We might aptly quote here the following and funny children's riddle which aims at finding a sentence where each word says one thing and its opposite: "a man who was not a man saw but did not see a bird that was not a bird perched and not perched on a tree that was not a tree; he hit it and did not hit it with a stone that was not a stone" (*ἀνήρ τε κοὐκ ἀνὴρ ὄρνιθά τε κοὐκ ὄρνιθα ἰδών τε κοὐκ ἰδὼν ἐπὶ ξύλου τε κοὐ ξύλου καθημένην τε κοὐ καθημένην λίθῳ τε κοὐ λίθῳ βάλοι τε κοὐ βάλοι.* (Eust. *Il.* VIII 282 [580 13 van der Valk]. The solution is: "a eunuch threw but did not hit a bat on a reed with a pumice stone". The enigma was ancient and well known. Plato mentions it in the *Republic* while Socrates, speaking of the immutability of beauty, disputes the designations and arguments that would attribute opposite qualities to the same object or idea. Glaucon says that such feeble attempts at reasoning remind him of a children's puzzle, or riddle: "these are like those puzzles one hears at parties, or the children's riddle about the

6. Prud'homme, 2013. Condeescu, 1973, 48.

7. On these texts and the bat, see Galoppin 2015, 97 and for the *Cyranides* 29-34; this important thesis includes many precious remarks on the use of the bat in ancient magic.

eunuch who threw something at a bat — the one about what he threw at it and what it was in" (*Rep*. V 479c; trans. Reeve).

As early as the archaic period, if we can trace the origin of Aesop's fables back that far, the bat was known for its contradictory duality, but also as an animal reputed for its intelligence: the very model of the one capable of playing with its double identity, capable of transforming into the other. Aesop's fable is worth quoting:

> *A bat (νυκτερὶς) who fell upon the ground and was caught by a weasel (ὑπὸ γαλῆς) pleaded to be spared his life. The weasel refused, saying that he was by nature the enemy of all birds. The bat assured him that he was not a bird, but a mouse (ἔφησεν αὐτὴ μὴ ὄρνεον εἶναι ἀλλὰ μῦν), and thus was set free. Shortly afterwards the bat again fell to the ground and was caught by another weasel, whom he likewise entreated not to eat him. The weasel said that he had a special hostility to mice. The bat assured him that he was not a mouse, but a bat (ἔλεγεν αὐτὴ μὴ μῦν εἶναι ἀλλὰ νυκτερίδα), and thus a second time escaped. It so happened that on two occasions, by changing her name (ἐναλλαξαμένη τὸ ὄνομα), she saved herself.*
>
> (Aesop. *Fab*. 182; trans. George Fyler Townsend with change).

The bat is shown, in this Fable, to be very similar to the *polytropos* ("versatile and changeful") Odysseus when, in his cunning, he deceives the Cyclops Polyphem attributing to himself an identity that is a non-identity, a name that means "nobody". There is no evidence that the composer of the *Odyssey* knew the fable of the bat (which certainly belonged to a very old folklore). But this is of little importance in the end. It is more interesting to verify that, in the ancient Greek imaginary, the values attached to the bat could recall the qualities of a hero like Ulysses. The comparison of Ulysses with the mouse-bird is not a coincidence. Odysseus is a skillful orator and he chose to compare himself to a bat on purpose : in the cave of the cyclops, he was already a double being able to deceive his enemy: a person no-person, a ram man when he came out of the cave under the ram's belly.

But to justify the comparison of Odysseus with the bat, there is a much more determining reason linked to the very name of the bat: "nukteris". Odysseus, as a word expert, also knows how to play with the bat's name and he will use it to define his own identity as we will see at the end of this analysis. When he compares himself to the bat, Odysseus is comparing himself to an animal that has a speaking-common-name. In ancient Greek, the name of the bat is a derivative of the name of the "night", "nux". Literally, the "nukteris", a feminine name in Greek, is "who she is because she belongs to the night or to the realm of the night. She sleeps by day and lives by night, she sees in the night. Like the owl, Athena's bird, the *nukteris* is, as Aristotle reminds us, a nocturnal animal. In the *Odyssey*, the second and only other simile involving bats associates them with Hermes and the souls of the suitors who are led into Hades:

> *And as when bats in the depth of an awful cave flitter and gibber, when one of them has fallen out of his place in the chain that the bats have formed by holding one on another; so, gibbering, they went their way together, and Hermes the kindly healer led them along down moldering pathways.* (*Od*. 24.6-10; trans. Lattimore)

> *ὡς δ' ὅτε νυκτερίδες μυχῷ ἄντρου θεσπεσίοιο*
> *τρίζουσαι ποτέονται, ἐπεί κέ τις ἀποπέσῃσιν*
> *ὁρμαθοῦ ἐκ πέτρης, ἀνά τ' ἀλλήλῃσιν ἔχονται,*
> *ὣς αἱ τετριγυῖαι ἅμ' ἤϊσαν· ἦρχε δ' ἄρα σφιν*
> *Ἑρμείας ἀκάκητα κατ' εὐρώεντα κέλευθα.*

Does Odysseus have a particular affinity with night, obscurity, caves or Hades? Is he a hero of the night, able like the bat to act and to travel through the night? Does he need to appear such? The word «night» (*νύξ*) appears 67 times in the *Iliad* and also 67 times in the *Odyssey* (I ignore here the difference between night as a personified entity and night as a common name). Most of the action in the *Iliad* takes place during the day and the battle must end by nightfall (see *Il.* VII 282). The night, as Homeric poetry says, must be obeyed and sleep is required: *ἀγαθὸν καὶ νυκτὶ πιθέσθαι,*

νῦν μὲν πειθώμεθα νυκτὶ μελαίνῃ.[8] Exceptions are few: a banquet may go on late into the night; sometimes worry or the fear of an enemy attack can keep a hero or an army awake.[9] This is true for Telemachos at the of *Odyssey* 1 (443), true also true for Zeus who spend a whole night meditating on a plan, as is the case at the beginning of Book II, while all the others, gods and men, spend the night sleeping (*εὗδον παννύχιοι*).[10] But the general rule of sleeping during night does not prevent night missions such as the Dolonia and it will come as no surprise to discover that it is up to Odysseus, together with Diomedes, to venture out into the night in this famous Iliadic episode.

It is not the place here to examine the Dolonia episode, interesting though it may be to our study. More relevant is to investigate the link that Odysseus may have with the night in the *Odyssey* and, in particular, in the long narrative he gives to the Phaeacians. In the *Odyssey*, night is not only a period of time, it is also, when night falls on the sea, a space that a ship can cross as if it were possible to go forward into the night, to reach the end of the night. The warriors of the *Iliad* must follow the rule to stop fighting when night falls, but this is not the case for the sailor who, on the open sea, must know how to resist sleep and stay awake. In his narration to the Phaeacians, Odysseus does not forget to remind his listeners of this by underlining the incredible capacity he has to spend several nights without sleeping, up to nine whole nights. At the beginning of Book 10, after leaving the island of Aeolus, taking advantage of a good wind, the hero describes how he alone held the rudder:

> *Nevertheless we sailed on, night and day, for nine days,*
> *and on the tenth at last appeared the land of our fathers,*
> *and we could see people tending fires, we were very close to them. But then the sweet sleep came upon me, for I was worn out with always han-*

8. *Il.*, 7. 282; 293; 8. 502; etc.
9. *Il.*, 2. 1-4; 8. 497-565; 9. 65 and 78; 10. 1-4; 24. 1-21.
10. *Il.*, 2. 2.

dling the sheet myself, and I would not give it to any other companion, so we could come home quicker to our own country.

(*Od.* 10.27-33).

Why does Odysseus want to emphasize that he can pursue a navigation day and night, without giving in to sleep? Does this indication have anything to do with his long narration? Odysseus is both a great navigator and a great storyteller and he is also a sleep-defying hero. We know that the night is advancing while he continues to tell the Phaeacians the story of his wanderings on the sea. His narration becomes like a sailing that progresses through the night.[11] Is it important for him to reach the end of the night with his story, to conclude it with at daybreak? What could be the interest for a storyteller to establish a correspondence between a datum of the story he is telling and one of the context of enunciation? Would the ancient singers resort to this technique of correspondence: describing, for example, a storm in their story while a storm broke out in the context of their performance?

We can here refer to Genette's founding distinctions between "le temps de l'histoire", "story time", *id est* the duration of the events narrated (in German "erzählte Zeit") and the time it takes to tell them, "le temps du récit", "narrative time", ("Erzählzeit").[12] Narrative time is a theoretical time that can be measured, if necessary, in words, lines, paragraphs. However, depending on the context of reception, on the speed of composition or reading, on the number of pauses and interruptions, its duration in real practice may vary considerably. Neither the *Iliad* nor the *Odyssey* have the scope to synchronize or harmonize these two lines of temporality which remain independent of each other. The 611 verses of Book 1 of the *Iliad* narrate the events of 21 days, while several thousand verses can be devoted to the action of a single day; Pierre Carlier and Oliver Taplin give the example of the verses XI 1 to XVIII 240, that is to say more than 5000 verses,

11. On narration as a form of navigation in the *Odyssey*, see Bouvier 2016, 86.
12. Genette 1972, 77. See now for ancient poetics Calame 2017.

to sing a single day.[13] In the *Odyssey*, eleven books, from the beginning of Book 13 to the end of Book 23, almost half of the epic, tell of events that take place over a period of only five days.

According to Genette, "comparing the "duration' of a narrative to that of the story it tells is a trickier operation, for the simple reason that no one can measure duration of a narrative", since the time needed to sing a song varies according to particular circumstances and therefore nothing allows to determine a "normal speed of execution". This operation is even more difficult in the case of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The transmission and development of the various forms of oral poetry in archaic Greece are too complex for us to say with certainty what the conditions of its reception could have been according to the different places, occasions and circumstances in which it was performed. Just as it is very difficult to specify the modalities of the passage from these traditions to written forms and the way the Ancient could listen or read this transcribed poetry. If, considering the little information we have, it remains very difficult to speak about the conditions of reception of the hexametric oral poetry, the poet of the *Odyssey* was himself, for sure, a pioneer of narratology.[14] The way he integrates the story of Odysseus into his poem, the way he presents the interaction between the story-telling hero, Odysseus, and the Phaeacian audience, shows that he had a perfect awareness of what narratologists today call "récit en action et en situation".[15] We will not know if and how the traditional singers synchronized (or not) the two levels of the story and the

13. Carlier 1999, 118 et Taplin 1992, 17.

14. A competence he certainly inherited from his predecessors, even this remark is only an assumption.

15. I borrow the expression "narrative in action" from Baetens 2017, 231-243; see also St. Pierre 2011, 17: «L'abstraction excessive de l'approche structurale et la complexité de définir la diversité des formes narratives par un schéma unique (Genette, 1972) amènent progressivement les théories du récit à s'intéresser au récit en action et en situation. La réflexion en ce domaine se dirige alors vers le contexte de la réception et de la lecture qui replace le récit dans des stratégies de communication où l'intention de l'auteur et le rôle du contexte social sont pris en considération (Eco, 1985). Loin de se réduire à la narratologie, les études sur le récit couvrent désormais la diversité des expériences qu'il induit».

narrative time, but, in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus gives us a masterly demonstration of this possibility. And of course we will not forget that it is the poet who lends his art to his hero narrator.

It is not easy for us to say at what point in the evening Odysseus starts to narrate his adventures to the Phaeacians. The day has already been very long. In the morning, the king Alcinous called an assembly to prepare the return of the visitor. Then he invited the counselors to his palace for a feast and celebration of games in honor of his guest. After the meal, the bard Demodocus performed a first song that was interrupted. Athletic competitions took place. Provoked by the young Phaeacians, Odysseus took up the challenge and shows his superiority in throwing the discus. Then the king invited the singer to accompany dances on his lyre and perform a new song; afterward, Odysseus received many gifts from the Phaeacians. It is the end of the day, the sun sets (VIII 417). But the reception continues at the palace of Alcinous. Before the dinner, the maids prepare a bath for the hero who receives new clothes. He then exchanges a few more words with Nausicaa and he joins the king for the meal. After having dinner, Odysseus invites Demodocos to sing of the Trojan horse and the sack of Troy, but as he listens to the singer, he again breaks down. Alcinous notices it and stops the performance; he then asks Odysseus to tell who he is and where he comes from. So it is clear that Odysseus started to tell the story of his adventures late in the evening.

From the beginning of book 9, the poet gives his voice to his hero to directly report his story. There is here synchronization or approximate isochrony: even if the speed of elocution (or vocal flow) is a variable that can differ from one speaker to another, one can admit that the duration of reception was more or less equivalent for the Phaeacians listening to Odysseus and for the audience listening to the singer or composer singing this episode of the *Odyssey*: theoretically, there is here «a sort of equality between the narrative section and the fictive section».[16] And the listener (or

16. GENETTE 1980, 87.

reader) of the *Odyssey* can imagine he is like the Phaeacians listening to Odysseus, forgetting how the voice of the hero could have been different.

The story has already lasted for 1500 verses, two and a half books (duration of the narrative time). As Odysseus is describing his visit to Hades and listing the wives and daughters of past princes, he interrupts himself to say that it is time to sleep:

> *But I could not tell over the whole number of them nor name all the women I saw who were the wives and daughters of heroes, for before that the divine night would give out. It is time now for my sleep, either joining my companions on board the fast ship, or here; but you, and the gods, will see to my homeward journey'. So he spoke, and all of them stayed stricken to silence, held in thrall by the story all through the shadowy chambers.*
>
> *πάσας δ' οὐκ ἄν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω, ὅσσας ἡρώων ἀλόχους ἴδον ἠδὲ θύγατρας· πρὶν γάρ κεν καὶ νὺξ φθῖτ' ἄμβροτος. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥρη (330) εὕδειν, ἢ ἐπὶ νῆα θοὴν ἐλθόντ' ἐς ἑταίρους ἢ αὐτοῦ· πομπὴ δὲ θεοῖσ' ὑμῖν τε μελήσει». ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῇ, κηληθμῷ δ' ἔσχοντο κατὰ μέγαρα σκιόεντα.*

In Book II of the *Iliad*, the primary narrator confessed to a limited memory which prevented him from listing all the names of the Achaean heroes and leaders:[17] it is precisely this insufficiency which justifies the prayer to the Muses for their help. In the *Odyssey*, it is just a matter of timetable. Odysseus who doesn't ask for any help from the Muses could continue (and indeed he will): he only reminds his guests that the night invites sleep. It is obvious that the hero interrupts his story to suggest to his listeners to ask him to continue. He wants to appear as the one who can talk endlessly all night long. And indeed, Alcinous will ask him to continue his story throughout a night that he would like to be endless.

17. *Il.* 2. 484-92.

But come now, tell me this and give me an accurate answer: Did you see any of your godlike companions, who once with you went to Ilion and there met their destiny? Here is a night that is very long, it is endless. It is not time yet to sleep in the palace. But go on telling your wonderful story. I myself could hold out until the bright dawn, if only you could bear to tell me, here in the palace, of your sufferings.

ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον, εἴ τινας ἀντιθέων ἑτάρων ἴδες, οἵ τοι ἅμ' αὐτῷ Ἴλιον εἰς ἅμ' ἕποντο καὶ αὐτοῦ πότμον ἐπέσπον. νὺξ δ' ἥδε μάλα μακρή, ἀθέσφατος, οὐδέ πω ὥρη εὕδειν ἐν μεγάρῳ· σὺ δέ μοι λέγε θέσκελα ἔργα. καί κεν ἐς ἠῶ δῖαν ἀνασχοίμην, ὅτε μοι σὺ τλαίης ἐν μεγάρῳ τὰ σὰ κήδεα μυθήσασθαι.

(*Od*. 11.370-376).

If Odysseus is the sailor who can resist sleep and guide his ship through the night, he is also the narrator who can sing, endlessly, until the end of the night. Let's reread the lines that, at the end of his story, will introduce the comparison with the bat. After the storm that destroyed his boat, thrown into the waters, alone in the middle of the sea, Odysseus is the plaything of the currents that bring him back to Charybdis and Scylla. This solitary journey is made in the night. The hero himself insists on this point and uses the adjective «pannuchios», «acting during the whole night», to qualify himself or his action:

After this the West Wind ceased from its stormy blowing,
and the South Wind came swiftly on, bringing to my spirit
grief that I must measure the whole way back to Charybdis.
All that night I was carried along, and with the sun rising
I came to the sea rock of Skylla, and dreaded Charybdis.
At this time Charybdis sucked down the sea's salt water,
but I reached high in the air above me, to where the tall fig tree grew, and caught hold of it and clung like a bat;

ἔνθ' ἦ τοι ζέφυρος μὲν ἐπαύσατο λαίλαπι θύων,
ἦλθε δ' ἐπὶ νότος ὦκα, φέρων ἐμῷ ἄλγεα θυμῷ,

ὄφρ' ἔτι τὴν ὀλοὴν ἀναμετρήσαιμι Χάρυβδιν.
παννύχιος *φερόμην, ἅμα δ' ἠελίῳ ἀνιόντι*
ἦλθον ἐπὶ Σκύλλης σκόπελον δεινήν τε Χάρυβδιν. (430)
ἡ μὲν ἀνερρύβδησε θαλάσσης ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ·
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ ποτὶ μακρὸν ἐρινεὸν ὑψόσ' ἀερθείς,
τῷ προσφὺς ἐχόμην ὡς ***νυκτερίς****·*

(Od. 12.426-433*)*

The expected and usual translation for παννύχιος or πάννυχος (23x in Homer) is that of the nominal syntagm which served as a model for its construction (*δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτός or διὰ πάσης νυκτός*, "during the whole night".[18] *Παννύχιος*, like its parallel *ἐννύχιος / ἔννυχος* (4x in Homer),[19] and the synonyms *νύχιος, νύκτωρ, νύκτερος, νύκτιος* (derived from the substantive *νύξ*) belong to the broad category of adjectives traditionally called predicative. These adjectives are used instead of an adverb. In the old but still essential *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*, R. Kühner and B. Gerth remind us that the Greek language often uses an adjective applied to a noun in such a way that it expresses a closer determination of the subject or object not in and of itself, but only with respect to the predicate. In this way, determinations of place and order, time, number, quantity, degree, reason, condition, manner, can be denoted by adjectives and referred to a noun in the same gender, case, and number. Here the

18. *Schol.* Vet. *D in Il. ad* 2.24; 2.61; 7.476; 7.478; etc. Following the model of the scholia, the paraphrast of the *Genavensis gr. 44* always reformulates *παννύχιος* with δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτός, see 2.2; 24; 61; 7.476; 478; 8.508; 554. For this manuscript, see the web site *Iliadoscope*, https://www2.unil.ch/iliade/#/home (accessed 1.11.22). *Παννύχιος* is also glossed with the adjective *νυκτερινός* («by night, nightly»), an adjective very close to the name of the bat; *Schol. in Od. ad* 2.434a2. See also the use of *νυκτερινός* as a substantive to designate: «a kind of musical composition for the flute, used in Dionysiac worship», see BCH50.235 (Thasos, iii B.C.). See also *νύκτερος*, a doublet.

19. Ancient glossaries and lexicographs regularly explain *ἐννύχιος / ἔννυχος* with the syntagms *ἐν νυκτί* or *διὰ τῆς νυκτός* («by night»): *Schol. vet. D in Il. ad* 11.715 et Hesychius ε3225, *s.v.*

adjective does lean on a noun, not as an attributive, but as a predicative.[20] To say that Achaeans were sleeping «the whole night through», Homeric Greek says *εὖδον παννύχιοι* (*Il.*2.2).[21] In Homer, *παννύχιος / πάννυχος and ἐννύχιος / ἔννυχος* seem to have always their paradigmatic (or adverbial) value. But, later, in Sophocles' tragedies, an adjective as *ἔννυχος* is attested with a very clear qualifying epithet value. In the *Trachiniae* (501), Hades is said *ἐννύχιος* and the dead are qualified by this adjective in the *Oedipus at Colonus* (1558).

If it is true that the paradigmatic value is the most frequent, it would be a mistake to forget that adjectives like *παννύχιος / πάννυχος* and *ἐννύχιος / ἔννυχος* play on a double register. It is only the context that determines the value to be given to these adjectives. And sometimes ambiguity can remain. To say that a person acts "at night", Homeric poetry could easily use, as it does, a nominal syntagm like *ἐν νυκτὸς ἀμολγῷ* (11.173) or *ἰῇ δ' ἐν νυκτὶ* (18.251) or *διὰ νύκτα* (8,510), or an adverb like *αὐτονυχί* "this very night", 8.197. The originality of this use of the adjective is that the person (to whom it refers) is qualified or determined by the spatial or temporal circumstance of his action. In the Homeric language, a person who acts at night is (grammatically) "a nocturnal person". R. Kühner and B. Gerth emphasizes this originality of Greek poetic language: unlike languages such as German or English, which in principle indicate the temporal circumstance by an adverb or a prepositional phrase, Greek can use with the predicative adjective « indem der nähere Umstand einer Handlung zugleich in die Persönlichkeit des Handelnden aufgenommen wird, als: *ἑσπέριος ἦλθεν* (vespertinus venit), gleichsam vom Abende umgeben. Dass in der nach anschaulicher Darstellung strebenden Dichtersprache dieser Gebrauch der Adjektive einen ungleich grösseren Umfang hat als in der Prosa,

20. Kühner & Gerth 1898, 273, § 405. See also Letoublon 1988, and, for French, Giry-Schneider 1997.

21. On this problem, see now the extensive and rigorous study of Rousseau 2016, 151-155 and 462-65, who prefers to speak of an «actual value» as opposed to «a virtual value».

ist natürlich».[22] Nathalie Rousseau is right to point out, with Wackernagel, that this is a "syntactic archaism", but this does not diminish the originality of this turn of phrase.

In his exhaustive repertory of adjectives that qualify gods and men, James H. Dee did not see fit to include and consider *πάννυχος* / *παννύχιος*. He thus lists the 64 adjectives or nouns that qualify Zeus and the 172[23] that qualify Odysseus,[24] but he omits *πάννυχος* that qualifies not only Zeus and Odysseus but also many other characters who are "nocturnal", "doing something during night". It is true that *παννύχιος* has in Homer a predicative value, but at the same time, it remains an adjective which grammatically accompanies a noun on which it depends. This choice is however a postulate that omits the originality of the Greek. What about Zeus who is *πάννυχος* when he "rained all night long" (*ὗε δ' ἄρα Ζεὺς πάννυχος*, *Od.* 14. 458)? The power a god has during night is to be considered and makes him a "puissance nocturne".[25]

Odysseus (or better the composer of the *Odyssey*) is a skillful speaker and a good grammarian. In our passage, he knows how to transform a particular predicative adjective into an epithet that confers on him a new characteristic. Shortly after emphasizing that, tossed by the winds and currents, he was the all-night-long hero (*παννύχιος*) swept towards the rock of Scylla and Charybdis 12.429), he chooses to compare himself to the bat, the nocturnal bird, the *νυκτερίς* (12.433). This echo reinforces the relevance of its comparison, a unique one as we said. After a night adrift at sea, at dawn he acted like the bat that returns to its tree and clings to it. This is practically the end of Odysseus' story and oral performance. Like the bat, he remained

22. Kühner & Gerth 1898, 274, § 405. This text is also quoted by Rousseau 2016, 153 who translates it into French: "dans la mesure où la circonstance plus précise d'une action est en même temps assumée par la personnalité de celui qui agit".

23. Dee 2001, 44-61.

24. Dee 2000, 302-35. On the works of Dee, see Bouvier 2021.

25. Even if this qualification is not comparable to what can be said of a Dionysus *νυκτέλιος* (from his nightly festivals); see AP9.524.14, Plu.2.389a, Paus.1.40.6. See Boyancé 1966

attached to the tree all day long (but here contrary to the bat, he doesn't sleep), and in the evening, as Charybdis spat out the beams of his wreckage, he dropped down to grab hold of them. The last three lines are enough to say how, after nine more days, he washed up on Calypso's shore. At the end of the Apologue, the identification with the bat is, for Odysseus, like a signature: he is the traveler who defies the night, the storyteller who can speak all night long. Odysseus is a nocturnal story teller. For this too, he fascinates his audience. In the proem of his *Theogony*, Hesiod sings, first of all, of the Heliconian Muses who "dance on their delicate feet around the dark spring and the altar of Cronus' mighty son" (*Th*. 3-4). And after they have washed, they perform choral dances and «from there they leave, veiled with thick mists (*κεκαλυμμέναι ἠέρι πολλῷ*), and while walking in the night (*ἐννύχιαι*),[26] they made hear their beautiful voice» (9-10). What about Muses singing by night? Their song is a song in the night and for that a "nocturnal" song, not because it speaks of the night but because it belongs to the night, as Odysseus' story does.

What about the kind of equality the Apologue establishes between the narrative and the fictive sections? It is precisely because there is, constructed and intended by the poet, a correspondance or a mirror effect between the time of the story, fictional time, and the narrative time that any discrepancy between these two levels will become significant or disturbing. While the night continues for the Phaeacians who listen to Odysseus' story, nothing requires that it is also night for the listener or reader of the *Odyssey*. But, the importance given to the night and to the story that can fill the night has a suggestive scope that cannot be neglected. We can introduce here the notion of «temps ressenti», felt time: whatever the moment of the day marked by the reception of the story, the listener can forget the real time to project himself into the time of the story and experience - mimetically - another time: let us call it: «felt time».

26. I prefer here to follow Mazon's suggestion rather than West' one accepted by Glenn Most in his translation for the Loeb collection: certainly, the Muses are invisible, but it is important to keep the Greek image of the veiled of mist.

Let me give you a personal example. In December 1997, I attended a theatre performance at the Cartoucherie de Vincennes, "Et soudain, des nuits d'éveil", a collective creation by the Théâtre du Soleil and Tibetan artists in exile, a play or performance written by Hélène Cixous and directed by Ariane Mnouchkine. The play described the fictional arrival in a theater of Tibetan refugees in search of a place to sleep. It was then necessary in the fiction to transform the theatre into a dormitory. It was difficult for the refugees to find sleep and anxiety prevented them from sleeping well. However, as the night advances, their discussions and the dialogues decreased. The scene was progressively plunged into darkness; silence settled in. How long? I am today unable to say. It was necessary for the Director to give the impression to the audience that these minutes lasted for hours, that they should feel like a night of sleep. After this moment of darkness there was a pause and the lights were slowly turned back on again while theatre employees (fictional and non-fictional) served coffee to the refugees and to the audience as if it were morning also for the public who had to wake up. At that moment, I had the impression that I really had spent a full night in the theatre.[27] This could happen too with the Apologue of Odysseus. And certainly the ancient bards were conscious of the nocturnal dimension of the Apologue. Maybe, they really were singing during "la nuit profonde".

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27. Cf. https://www.theatre-du-soleil.fr/fr/notre-theatre/les-spectacles/et-soudain-des-nuits-d-eveil-1997-165.

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Flora Manakidou

Κραδίη δέ οἱ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει: ODYSSEUS AND DOGS IN THE ODYSSEY

καὶ γὰρ τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν πιπτόντων
ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν (Matth.15.27)

1. Preliminary remarks

In the Homeric epics we can easily distinguish two groups of animals, one with wild animals that belong to nature and one with domestic animals that are part of the household. As is to be expected in the masculine world of *Iliad*, the so-called powerful animals are predominant, as lions, wolves and boars. In the domestic sphere, dogs and horses are the most prominent part.[1] Of the 62 species all but 5 appear within similes: of the 226 Iliadic similes, 125 involve animals. This consistency leads to a first observation, namely that animals are introduced mainly as tertium comparationis for human situations and do not appear as autonomous beings. In the post-war world of *Odyssey* there are fewer similes and consequently fewer animals.[2]

Very often an animal has a human disposition, human feelings and perceptions.[3] A wide variety of animals are presented with both positive and negative emotions such as desire, courage, lust, bravery, pride, joy, dis-

1. Redfield 1975, 195-196 noticed the difference between horses that often have names and the unnamed dogs.

2. On the difference of lion similes in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in connection with the ideas of heroism, Pucci 1987, 157-161.

3. On Homeric animals see e.g. above n.1 and Sachs 1886, 17-23, Dierauer 1977, Lonsdale 1990.

illusion/disappointment.[4] By analogy human conditions are transferred to non-human entities.[5] Two qualities of prime importance separate animals from gods and humans the intellectual ability, the *noein* (although there is an exception to that as we may see afterwards), and speech.[6]

If things are clear for wild animals or domestic animals such as horses and pigs or cattle, the case of the dog is not at all clear as the animal belongs to both categories or, while belonging to one, may occasionally acquire characteristics of the other. In Antiquity dogs enjoyed a special status because their nature makes them stand at the threshold of domestication and wildness. According the general distinction made by James Redfield dogs stand between the two worlds of culture and nature. This can be termed as "liminal condition".[7] On the other hand, the maxim "Quot canes tot sententiae" holds true, as the Aesopic corpus points out: there are many types of dogs and this multiformity further complicates the discussion (Aesop 343 Perry).[8]

Near the literal use of the dog the ancients used the animal figurative-

4. E.g.: *χάρμη* ('Kampffreude'): *Il.*1 6.823 (lion). Will and lion: *Il.* 17.109-112. Desire and horses: *Il.* 11.161. Lust and lion: *Il.* 11.239: Joy and birds: *Il.* 2.462, joy and lion 3.23. Pride and boar: *Il.* 6.506-10 and 13.471, pride and lion: 5.299, 13.471, pride and lion: *Od.* 6.13, pride and horse: *Il.* 15.263-7. Disillusion and lion: *Il.*1 1.555 and 17.664. The opposite is also valid: Achilles is human and ought to follow his human nature and not the wild insticts of a lion (*Il.* 24.39-45). Padel 1992.

5. The nest of wasps and bees is called a house: *Il.* 12. 167-72.

6. Heath 2005.

7. Redfield 1975, 193-199 (e.g., 194: "man is to god as dog is to man"). Franco 2014, 74. Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981, 168. On threshold in the *Odyssey* Segal 1967, 331-42. Franco is a reference book for an overview of Greek dogs, already Lilja 1976. On Homeric dogs: Scott 1948, 226-228; Hainsworth 1961, 122-125 (on the Odysseus-Eumaeus episode in Book 14); Faust 1970; Rose 1979, 215-30; Rohdich 1980, 33-50; Goldhill 1988, 9-19; Scodel 2005, 401-8; Wolkow 2007 and Worman 2008 included the dog-imagery in her presentation. There is also a still unpublished lemma about dogs by Maria Noussia-Fantuzzi (*Dictionnaire des images du poétique*, forthcoming) with a concise and very useful survey on dogs' literary history and I thank her for providing me the draft.

8. "we have many different characters and are all proud of where we come from. There is not one color equal for all. How can I lead them into battle, so discordant and diverse in every way?" Aesop 343 Perry)

ly as an insult. The 'good evil', Pandora received from Hermes a "canine mind" (*κύνεος νόος W & D* 67),[9] and with it was meant a wide range of behaviors of a lowered nature such as shamelessness, greediness, incestuous sexuality, gluttony/voracity, deception in acting, thievery and biting secretly. Taken that the first woman is bestowed with characterizations that indicate an ambivalent nature, this quality may be considered as part of an ambivalent, both positive and negative, nature.[10]

As we shall see, there are many possible interpretations concerning the *Odyssey's* poet's evaluation of the dog, but here we are interested in whether the dog has been exploited by the poet for the goals of this particular epic plot. The present research benefits from both the literal and the figurative use of the animal within the broader conception of Homeric animals. It will focus on their relationship with food, assault, and aggression and always in relation to humans. It will be shown that in the second part of the epic story, at Ithaca's territory, Odysseus is often presented as a human dog and that many of his actions find an explanation when we compare them with Homer's presentation of dogs. It will be argued that beggars and, especially, the most important of them and of course a fake, Odysseus, adopt the role of the dog because beggars share with this animal the same characteristics: hunger, the need for food, the struggle for survival and their relationship with humans as a relationship of dependency. It will be argued that the disguise of Odysseus as a beggar reminds us of the mostly negative qualities of a *trapezeus* dog and that he uses this device in order to regain his position in his kingdom.

9. On Pandora's quality of *κύνεον νόον* Franco 2014, 137-153, Wolkow 2007, 247-262 on flattery, greed, and deception, gluttony, loquaciousness, curiosity, acquisitiveness, deception, thievery and biting secretly (*λαίθαργος*), on dogs and negative qualities 251, on Hermes and dogs 253, Silver 1992, 155f; 251ff., 257.

10. I dealt with the dual nature of Pandora in a paper presented in honour of M. Christopoulos, "Pandora, Athena, the Kekropides, and the Erechtheides: Female Duality in Athenian Myth and Cult" (*Classics*@25). An interesting case is the Socratic oath 'by the dog': see my forthcoming "Thoughts on the Socratic oath: *Μά (νή) τὸν κύνα*." (in a collective volume Witness in Antiquity, Cambridge Scholars Press).

2. Dogs and Eating

In the Homeric epics the close relationship between animals and humans involves food as a means of survival. Mortals consume animal meat but can also become animal food.[11] This is a common feature of both poems.[12] On the subject of the relationship between the dog and Odysseus, it is particularly significant that animals appear in a programmatic way in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from the preamble onwards, especially in relation to food and its necessity. Indeed, in both epics the issue is directly and clearly linked to survival, life and death, depending on the type of story, i.e., on the battlefield or during the return respectively. Warriors who fall on the battlefield are threatened to be prey and eaten by dogs and birds; Odysseus' foolish companions are also condemned to death precisely because they have irreverently consumed the sacred cows of the Sun. In both cases this horrible fate is supported by the consent of the gods, Zeus and the Sun respectively:

πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψε
ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.

and sent forth to Hades many valiant souls
of warriors, and made themselves to be a spoil for dogs
and all manner of birds. (*Il.* 1.3-5)

αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο

11. This act is defined by Faust 1970 as 'Leichenfresser' under C. See Redfield 1975, 169 that no one in the *Iliad* is fed to the dogs.

12. Scott 1948, 226-228 concluded that the Iliadic dogs featuring in the war are hostile and negative beings, while in the *Odyssey* the poet seems to be their "friend and lover". This led him to state that in both poems there is a consistency in their treatment, either positively or negatively. Beck 1991, 158-167 who agreed with this, made the noteworthy remark that there is a compositional progression in the number of verses referring to dogs in the poem (Alcinous 4 verses, Kirke 8, Eumaeus 18, Odysseus-Argus 37).

ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.

for through their own blind folly they perished
fools, who devoured the kine of Helios Hyperion;
but he took from them the day of their returning." (*Od.* 1.7-9)[13]

Especially dogs are suitable for examination in relation to food. A warrior like Achilles has nine dogs that all share the table with him and two of them are sacrificed last in line among the offerings in honor of the dead Patroclus, and just before the terrible act of human sacrifice of the Trojan captives (*Il.* 23.173-174).[14] In their capacity as watchers and guardians they are dependent on their master and their life is consistent with the nature of the world to which each such dog belongs. As the dogs appear on the battlefield as *Menschenfresser* and their presence emphasizes and reveals the brutality of war, they can also engage in a pathetic reversal of normality. A striking example is provided by Priam, who toys with the possibility of being eaten by his own domestic dogs, and this is the culmination of the wretchedness called war (*Il.* 22.66-76).[15] In the peaceful world of *Odyssey* a similar idea is given in the abusive behaviour of the suitor against Eumaeus when he threatens to be eaten by his own guard dogs:

...Soon by thy swine, alone and apart from men, shall the swift hounds devour thee
hounds thyself didst rear...

... τάχ' αὖ σ' ἐφ' ὕεσσι κύνες ταχέες κατέδονται
οἷον ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων, οὓς ἔτρεφες... (*Od.* 21. 363-365)

13. All translations of the *Odyssey* from MURRAY 1919 (1974) and of the *Iliad* from Murray 1924/1960.

14. SCOTT 1948, 228.

15. WORMAN 2007, 30-35 who also discussed the cannibalistic hero Achilles. In the *Odyssey* Telemachus speaks for a possible fate threatening Odysseus (3.259 "but the dogs and birds would have torn him", *ἀλλ' ἄρα τόν γε κύνες καὶ οἰωνοὶ κατέδαψαν*).

3. Odysseus the Dog: "Like Master-Like Dog" or "Like dog-Like Hero"?

In the *Odyssey*, dogs appear as an essential part of domestic life as guardians and familiar animals that in different places are closely tied to their master with whom they share the same characteristics and complement his or her presentation. The biotic aspect of the *Odyssey*[16] does not allow for sentimentality. Edwards' view that dogs appear «each time someone approaches a dwelling»[17] is of course right but needs to be supplemented on a contextual basis because dogs never exist autonomously but always in relation to humans. Beck[18] dealt very diligently on the Odyssean dogs and concluded that the material bespeaks a very positive attitude toward dogs and the poet loves the animal even if he also makes use of the negative aspects of the animal in the derogatory use of the bad people.[19]

I will then show that his principle of like-master-like-dog and his positive evaluation do not emerge from the way the poet has Odysseus handle animals or the poet handles Odysseus as a human animal.

I will limit myself here only to the dogs of Ithaca and especially to their relationship with Odysseus and vice verso to Odysseus' exploitation of the canine qualities.[20]

While dogs are absent from the palaces of Pylos and Sparta (not to mention the absence of a dog in the breeder Cyclops and the cows of the Sun) in Ithaca there are dogs and are described in a very realistic way. Telema-

16. In the hard-working world of the Hesiodic farmer dogs are called as well-fed jagged-toothed to keep thieves away (*W&D* 604-5).

17. Edwards 1987, 54.

18. Beck 1991.

19. Dog insults against the violent suitors (22.35: Franco 2014, 84) and the disloyal slaves (Melantho 18.338; Worman 38 and as a traitor: Franco 99-101; Melanthius 22.476: both slaves are doomed in a cruel end; The former's fate will be to be cut to bits (*he may cut thee limb from limb* / *διὰ μελεϊστὶ τάμῃσιν* 18.339). Nagy 1979, 226f.; Worman 2008, 33f. and on Irus 38f. Achill insults Hector 'the dog' in *Il.* 22.345-54.

20. For a thorough discussion Goldhill 1988.

chus makes his entrance in the assembly and then in his palace armed with a spear and accompanied by a pair of swift dogs:

> *ot alone, for along with him two swift hounds followed,*
> *οὐκ οἶος, ἅμα τῷ γε δύω κύνες ἀργοὶ ἕποντο* (2.11)

and *with him went two swift hounds,*
ἅμα τῷ γε δύω κύνες ἀργοὶ ἕποντο (17.62 = 20.145)

In their capacity as effective guardians of flocks and swine-stables (*συφεοί*), four dogs appear at the beginning of the episode with Eumaeus.[21] their reaction to humans follows the expected. To the unknown Odysseus they bark aggressively as befits their role as guardians while to the familiar Telemachus they wag their tails. In the appearance of Athena, the dogs along with Odysseus have the privilege of seeing the goddess, while the other mortals of the story do not see her, «for in no wise do the gods appear in manifest presence to all. But Odysseus saw her, and the hounds, and they barked not, but with whining slunk in fear to the further side of the farmstead» (16. 161-163).[22] Equally realistic is their obedience to the orders of their master, Eumaeus who has raised them and feeds them.[23] Even so, the

21. The relevant lines are: 14.21-22, 14.29-32, 14. 37-8, 16. 4-7 (Odysseus, Eumaeus and the dogs). 16. 8-10 (Telemachus and the dogs), (Athene and the dogs), 21.363-365 (Eumaeus and the dogs). Williams 1986, 395-397 for the parody of the reception including the dogs and pigs.

22. See Rose 1979, 220: "the choice of dogs for this purpose…represents the first thread in a consistent, meaningful pattern"; Goldhill 1988, e.g., 12-13: «Odysseus' return towards his home and towards *order* [sic] is articulated through his different encounters with the animals that guard the thresholds of his *nostos*. (...) The differences between the different societies and people Odysseus meets are expressed through the different guard dogs, different receptions by guard dogs. (...) From Scylla, to wolves like dogs, to gold and silver dogs, to dogs like wild beasts... [sic] each crossing of a threshold of *nostos*, as Odysseus is gradually reincorporated into the *oikos*, is linked by the animal figures that articulate the (transgressed) boundary between the wild, outside world and the domestic, inside world of the household».

23. Bowie 2013 ad. loc. p. 169 sees here also a prefiguration of the future aid of the servants. On his wild 'cousin' Franco, 2014, esp. 28-31, 37.

scene with Odysseus is not only a realistic portrayal of a scene in the countryside, but it also highlights Odysseus' alienation from his own homeland and adds another, unexpected danger to his nostos at a time when everything seems to be moving towards a happy ending. In this way, Odysseus' cunning (*κερδοσύνη* l. 31) is emphasized, which is the way in which the hero overcomes any kind of danger that threatens him.[24] The reference to cunning turns the scene into a genre miniature of the greater dangers that Odysseus will face shortly afterwards in the palace with human threats.

The rural anonymous dogs of Eumaeus foreshadow by contrast their eponymous companion Argos in the palace. Of course, he is the most popular domestic dog of all, [25] and of course he is superior to the humble guardians or the table dog as his master refers to him in Eumaeus (17.306-310; cf. Priam's dogs in *Il.* 22.69).[26] His main difference from common dogs is the ability of the hunting dog. Although the scene with Argos has been the subject of much research as regards its intense emotional charge that stands alone as an example of the relationship between master and animal, there is room to examine it in relation to the disguise of Odysseus as a beggar before and after this scene. It is noteworthy that there is no mention of the presence of any *trapezeus* dog as we would expect in the ongoing palace banquets. On the other hand, we are informed that the pigs and dogs are kept outside the palace in the spot that is considered the lowest since that is where the professional beggar Iros is said to belong (18.105, *ἐνταυθοῖ ἦσο σύας τε κύνας τ' ἀπερύκων*). In fact, even the highest dog of all, Argos, lays not in the main part of the palace but outside (17.297 *προπάροιθεν θυράων*, 324 *εἰσῆλθε δόμους*).[27] In this therefore the dog re-

24. Hainsworth 1961, 124.

25. Wirshbo 1983. Williams 1986. Most 2013 with a survey of the reception of this dog in Antiquity.

26. Franco 2014, 37-40 on feeding and 49-51 on the importance of food as a sign of the dog's assimilations into the house and its symbiosis with human society.

27. The dog stands at the usual and recommended place for a guardian dog (Il. to Glaukos: *Homeri opera* vol.5, p. 206 Allen the biography of Homer falsely attributed to Herodotus: see Franco 2014, 42 with n.104).

sembles the beggar, as both possess a liminal position (18.101-102, 105).

The dramatic meeting between Odysseus and his dog is prepared in a paradoxical way because the hero himself acquires the characteristics of an animal and a dog. The bad slave, Melantheus, calls him a greedy fellow (*μολοβρόν* 17.220), which is used for the young of wild pigs, notorious for their greediness, and a feast-spoiler, *δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντῆρα* (17.220). After the Argos' scene Antinoos also calls him in the same way (*δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντῆρες*, 18.377).[28] The dependence on food and gluttony is also characteristic of the other beggar Iros for whom Antinous sets as a prize food (18.44-46.). This insult recalls the Hesiodic *δειπνολόχη* "bad wife" ('dinner-thief', *WD* 704),[29] and her model, Pandora, who, as said, is endowed with a thievish and deceptive canine nature.

The status of beggar therefore has characteristics of a *trapezeus* dog. Indeed, Odysseus disguised as a beggar is acting like the animal but every time he does so, this is part of his cunning plan.[30] When he approaches his palace for the first time after twenty years, he confesses that he recognizes it through his senses just like a good hunting dog who tracks down his food: he sees, smells, and hears the smoke of the cooked meat and listens to the feast and song (17.265-271 *ἀρίγνωτα…ἰδέσθαι…γινώσκω… κνίση ἐνήνοθεν,…φόρμιγξ/ἠπύει*).[31]

Inside the palace the poet makes sure to say that the hero eats during the performance of Phemius and stops eating as soon as the singer stops:

28. For a different meaning related to baldness and disease COUGHANOWR 1979, 229-30. RUSSO ad 17.219 with literature *μολοῦντα πρὸς βρῶσιν*, glutton (Apoll. Soph. *Lex.Hom.* p. 113, 25 *γαστρίμαργον ἢ ἐπαίτην ἢ ἀλήτην…*)? Or related to *μολόβριον*, young wild pig (Ael. *NA* 7.47). Hipp. fr.114b1 *κρέας ἐκ μολοβρίτεω συός.*

29. WOLKOW 2007, 253-256 (combination of appetite and guile).

30. The *formulas* pointing to *polymetis* Odysseus during his stay are revealing for this strategy: e.g., 18.51 *with crafty mind Odysseus of many wiles spoke among them* / *τοῖς δὲ δολοφρονέων μετέφη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς* (cf. *πολύμητις* 14/his ponderation in his battle with Iros 90-93). Even if he temporarily adopted this role, he remained the *polymetis*, planning man. On the tracking dog as a metaphor in Plato see my forthcoming article above n.2.

31. WORMAN 2008, 36.

then he ate so long as the minstrel sang in the halls.
But when he had dined and the divine minstrel was ceasing to sing...

ἤσθιε δ' ἦος ἀοιδὸς ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἄειδεν·
εὖθ' ὁ δεδειπνήκειν, ὁ δ' ἐπαύετο θεῖος ἀοιδός... (17.358-59)

Odysseus' chief "transgression" (to use Franco's term)[32] is that he does not follow the basic rule of the banquet: the song begins when the food and drink are finished and listening to it requires a silent audience (e.g. in Book one). The explanation I have given elsewhere for this unorthodox behavior during a symposium, and indeed for Odysseus' indifference to poetry, is that this behavior is fitting for a beggar who is solely concerned with his own survival.[33] A beggar cannot do otherwise. We shall come later to this specific feature of eating and survival. Even so, Odysseus is as different from a beggar as he is from an animal, and even in this he manages to outwit his opponents. His disguise serves a very well-designed deceptive plan, while not excluding his ability, unlike the low-level beggar and the speechless dog, to tell a series of deceptive fabricated stories. All these actions are part of his strategy and he achieves it since no one really understands his real identity.[34] As before, during the nostos outside Ithaca, so in his palace Odysseus plays with appearances that are deceptive and conceal reality only to reveal it at the right moment. The triple reaction of the suitors throwing Odysseus a stool for his gluttony recalls a familiar banquet situation where dogs run around under the tables and upset the guests. (Antinoos 17.462-465; cf. Eurymachus 397-398; Ctesippus 20.299ff.). A dog eats from the tables of humans, but despite its privileged position "must stay in its place".[35] As said, like the dog, beggars like Iros and Odysseus stand in a

32. Franco 2014, 81f. On Odysseus' deliberate strategy and the problem of the text in ll.358-360 see Manakidou 2018, 241-242.

33. On Odysseus' strategy towards Phemius see Manakidou 2018, 241-257.

34. Murnaghan 1987, 76-78, 82-88.

35. Franco 2014, 27. In one of Homer's biographies a shepherd named Glaucus allowed his guard dogs to surround the full table and thus received a comment by Homer (Franco 42 with n. 104 and 119 with n. 190). for the courtyard feeding.

liminal spot together with domestic animals (18.101-102, 105):

> *Odysseus seized him by the foot, and dragged him forth through the doorway until he came to the court and the gates of the portico. And he set him down and leaned him against the wall of the court*
> *... Sit there now, and scare off swine and dogs*
>
> *ἕλκε διὲκ προθύροιο λαβὼν ποδός, ὄφρ' ἵκετ' αὐλὴν*
> *αἰθούσης τε θύρας· και μιν ποτὶ ἑρκίον αὐλῆς*
> *εἶσεν ἀνακλίνας...*
> *ἐνταυθοῖ ἦσο σύας τε κύνας τ' ἀπερύκων...* (18.105)

and *Odysseus lay down to sleep in the fore-hall of the house*
Αὐτὰρ ὁ ἐν προδόμῳ εὐνάζετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς (20.1).[36]

Odysseus acts as a human dog and then during his stay as a beggar in disguise. Already Nancy Worman spoke of "beggared, doggish Odysseus exchanging cruel abuses with other lowly types", "a bartering type focused on the body's needs ... [who] participates in a discourse focused around the hungry belly".[37] Indeed, this attitude is evident during Odysseus' Iambic *ante litteram* fight with Iros the genuine beggar, and the two of them fight like dogs (*μαλώνουν σαν σκυλιά,* (in modern Greek) fighting over their food. They both care only about their bellies and nothing else: Iros is introduced based on the need for insatiable food

> *and was known for his greedy belly, eating and drinking without end*
> *μετὰ δ' ἔπρεπε γαστέρι μάργῃ/ἀζηχὲς φαγέμεν καὶ πιέμεν* (18.2).[38]

36. Russo ad 17.33 (48-49) rightly points out the liminal position of Odysseus as beggar: the liminal position is indeed a doggish feature.

37. 2008, passim, e.g. 26, 30 n. 19, 36ff.

38. Nagy 1979, 222-232, 225-226; Pucci 1987, 161-164 on the tensions between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and on beggars 177-80 and mentioned Monro's (1901) remark: "in the story of Irus the language of the *Iliad* is borrowed and parodied" (162, n.11).

Undoubtedly this conflict foreshadows the next killing of the suitors,[39] but also presents Odysseus as an "Intruder", which is the third mask for the rash and shameless dogs Christiana Franco explored[40] and the "debased and mocking", "abusive and appetitive outsider" according Nancy Worman.[41] The context includes shamelessness,[42] lack of restraint and boldness and accordingly, the reaction of the banqueters is to reward the winner with a sausage (44 *γαστέρες*, 118). Iros' name, Arnaios, displays his sheep-like nature. Facing a sheep-like opponent the disguised Odysseus acts as a *trapezeus* dog in the «arena of food» as Franco defined the banquet which is "the space that both unites men and dogs and distinguished them, by fixing a definite hierarchy".[43]

The wording for the defeat of an opponent *κὰδ δ' ἔπεσ' ἐν κονίῃσι μακών* (*down he fell in the dust*, 98) is used elsewhere for the death of an animal.[44] The fight is reminiscent of the way Semonides describes how a man stops a bitch: "… he gnashed his teeth, kicking the ground with his feet", "*σὺν δ' ἤλασ' ὀδόντας/λακτίζων ποσὶ γαῖαν…*" (18.98-99); Sem. fr.7.16f. "*παύσειε δ' ἄν μιν οὔτ' ἀπειλήσας ἀνήρ, / οὐδ' εἰ χολωθεὶς ἐξαράξειεν λίθωι*".[45] Iros' defeat leads him to return to his original position with the pigs and dogs outside the house ("Sit there now, and scare off swine and dogs", "*ἐνταυθοῖ νῦν ἧσο σύας τε κύνας τ' ἀπερύκων…*" 18.105). As for Odysseus, there is still no room for a heroic simile here. He is not compared to a hearted lion

39. Levine 1982, 200-204.

40. In the chapter "The Intruder", 87-89.

41. Worman 2008, 26, 40 on the abusive, appetitive outsider, 61, 155 and in the Iambus and Comedy passim.

42. Later Melantho blames him for his *tharsos* (*θαρσαλέως* 18.330) and thus accepts the caracterization of dog from Odysseus.

43. Franco 2014, 21-27, 26 and "the banquet is the space that both unites men and dogs and distinguished them, by fixing a definite hierarchy". See also chapter 3, "Food for dogs" 55-74. Already Svenbro 1976, esp. 55f.

44. 19.454 (boar), 10.163 (stag), *Il.* 16.469 (horse). Levine 1982, 201.

45. Wolkow 2007, 248-249. Melantho threatens Odysseus 18.335f:
to beat thee about the head with heavy hands, and befoul thee with streams of blood
ἀμφὶ κάρη κεκοπὼς χερσὶ στιβαρῇσι/δώματος ἐκπέμψῃσι φορύξας αἵματι πολλῷ.

or a wild boar; he is not even a *Menschenfresser* like Achilles in the battlefield.[46] He will indeed earn this simile only after the end of *mnesterophonia* and then the doglike beggar will be deservedly compared with a lion terrible in appearance and thus gain the same place as the first of the Achaeans[47] often likened to a lion.[48]

The theme of food leads directly to the nature of the *trapezeus* dog. The story has already dealt with the necessity of the belly and the *γαστήρ*-motif, hunger and belly at the same time, and the issue had already played an important role in Odysseus' strategy outside Ithaca. Already in the *Iliad* he is the only hero who is shown to deal with the issue of food and the belly and to propagate their importance.[49] At Scheria the hero called the belly as 'more doggish' (*κύντερον*): "there is nothing more doggish [Pucci: bestial] than the hateful "belly/hunger" (7.216-217). The passage was condemned by many scholars because it lacked the heroic dignity.[50] But if we interpret it as part of the concealment of his identity in order to sur-

46. Achilles the dog: 22.188-93; 22.26-32; Worman 2008 on the cannibalistic hero Achilles 30ff., esp. 33. Nagy 1979, 227 n.6 and Franco 2014, 99-104 on the dog-like traitor and 223 n.94. A rather strange comparison is the dog-fly (Ares at Athena: *Il.*21.394-5).

47. Worman 2008, 30-33.

48. Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981, Lonsdale 1990.

49. Agamemnon insulted Odysseus by recalling the latter's eagerness for eating and drinking (4. 343-6). In the *Iliad* the only extended speech on food and its importance (*γαστέρι* 19. 225) comes from the mouth of Odysseus in his confrontation with Achilles; there the former summoned for eating before the battle (19.155-72), the latter rejected this idea (19.205-14; cf. again on *στυγερῇ …δαιτί* 23.48, see also Thetis' words 24.130) and Odysseus comes back with a renewed proposition to eat (19.225-231, *γαστέρι* l.225 = hunger). See Pucci 1987, 165-172 together with its sequel in Book 24 in terms of life, death and heroism, and finds a direct answer of the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey* (sic 169). Vernant 1979 on *gaster* as a kind of synecdoche for the human condition. According Thetis Achilles is "eating his own heart" (*Il.* 24. 128) and Athena brings Achilles nectar and ambrosia (19.342 ff.). Together with Odysseus' fair-sharing in opposition to Achilles' cannibalistic behavior: Worman 2008, 31.-

50. 1987, 174 with n.2 (shameful, brutal, ghastly). On the deletion see Pucci 1987, 174, n.4. Franco 2014, 118: "Odysseus seems to beg the Phaeacians' pardon as though it were his dog that was pestering them: the famished belly is a ravenous dog that begs for food from within..."

vive in the Phaeacians then it serves the same purpose in Ithaca.[51] There we are indeed told either by him or by others who observe him that he is tied to his belly and all he cares about is his lowly need to fill it with food. Next to the abuses *μολοβρός* and *δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντήρ* Melanthius blames him for his "insatiate belly" (*γαστέρ' ἄναλτον*, 17.226-228), the same says the suitor Eurymachus (18.362-364) and Odysseus answers him again by talking about his belly ("taunting me with this belly of mine", "*οὐδ' ἄν μοι τὴν γαστέρ' ὀνειδίζων ἀγορεύοις*"18.380).[52]

Pucci made important observations about Odysseus's use of *gaster* disguised as a beggar, always in a negative way. Although the hero remains all this time a hearted and resourceful hero, one who never forgets that he is a hero, we can add that the "cultural realm far removed from the epic decorum" contains not only human but also animal's behavior. [53] And in this respect he is fooling his opponents. After the fight (18.312-339), the wicked servant Melantho judges him as insolent (as a dog is: "unabashed in the company of many lords, and hast no fear at heart", *θαρσαλέως πολλοῖσι μετ' ἀνδράσιν, οὐδέ τι θυμῷ / ταρβεῖς* 330f.) but Odysseus turns this trait on her by calling her a "dog", i.e., shameless (18.338) thus betraying that his own doggish "insolence" is a cover for his real versatile mind.[54]

51. On the importance of *γαστήρ* see Svenbro 1976, 50-59, Pucci 1987, 157-208, and on 17.286-7 and *Il.*1.1-2: 175-6 with n.8 (176) pointing out the analogy with the Iliadic *μῆνις*, the origin of evil for men and the passages on belly in the *Odyssey* (e.g., 15.343-5; 17.288-89); on beggars and Iros in the *Odyssey* Pucci 1987, 177ff. see below n. 48; Worman 2008, 30 and 36 with literature in n.38.

52. Worman 2008, 36. Russo 1992, ad loc., 70 characterizes Odysseus' speech "an amazingly bold speech for a beggar to make to a nobleman!".

53. 1987, 178-179. Odysseus uses the very negative term of *gaster* "only when Od. speaks of human restlessness in general and especially when he is disguised as a beggar and can reasonably borrow a term from a cultural realm far removed from the epic decorum. Thus the Odyssey presents an odd strategy: on the one hand, *gaster* names the instinctual source of all the human activity the poem presents; on the other hand, the text uses this word cautiously and restrictedly" (179).

54. Franco 2014, 80-82 and on the variety and complexity of these terms (shamelessness, courage) as regards the dogs, and her ch. 4 "Sad Fates, Low Morals, and Heinous Behaviors", 75-120.

The masquerade of Odysseus as a begging table dog finds its decisive confirmation in two similes just before his final unveiling and the killing of the suitors. In the first Odysseus is likened to a bitch (20.9-16) and in the second to a sausage (20.24-30).

To cut a long story short, instead of the impulsive and instinctive reaction of the bitch mother facing a danger, Odysseus refrains from his initial reaction, refuses to act instinctively and chooses to act with self-discipline and self-control after planning and deciding on the best plan. After this simile his monologue that so impresses with its modernity is the complete opposite of the dog-like barking that will bring an uncertain result depending on the strength of the opponent. Different from the impulse of the animal, Odysseus' attitude consists of endurance, self-restraint, and calculation of the right moment for action. He recalls the episode with the Cyclops which was undoubtedly the tour de force for his ability to conceal his identity and act according to the best plan (*metis*). He characterised this episode as previously his belly (7.216).[55] as "more doggish" experience (κύντερον l. 18). It is now clear that all his previous actions at the banquet were part of his plan and that he managed to fool everyone including Penelope and Eurykleia thanks to his disguise. In other words, in the preceding incidents, he was and was not a dog as he was and was not a beggar (20. 17-24).[56]

The second simile shows Odysseus reaching the lowest level just before his *aristeia* begins. This time he is not likened to an animal (20.24-30) but to the food of a dog like the one Antinous gave him as a trophy befitting a beggar for the battle between beggars who look like table dogs: a sausage (18.44, 118f.; sausage in *Il.* 6.58). And again, this so derogatory image is once again mixed with the basic qualities of Odysseus: He contemplates, reflects, plans the best plan to eliminate his redundant oppo-

55. Hera by his indignant husband (8.483 *οὐ σὲ κύντερον ἄλλο*) and Klytaimnestra, killer of her own husband who after death calls her so (11.427). Franco 2014, 118-210.

56. Pace Rose 1979, 229 on the image of the "protective *κύων*", on "Odysseus as a loyal and angry dog ready to attack", "Odysseus is acting the watchdog".

nents. In a sense the poet constructs the lowest level of his hero as a thinking (*μερμηρίζων*) sausage!

So, if we look back at the episode with Argos, this seems like a parenthesis in the master's plan because of its intense emotional impact but at the same time if we look at it within Odysseus' plan, it says more about the difference between dog and man than about affinities in the nature of these two. Even though the dog is endowed with mental ability (*noeon*) like its master, the absence of speech distances him from him. Even more so that his master has a special gift of speech that allows him to tell not only truths but also false stories that are believed. Argos' physical helplessness stands in contrast with his master who overcomes beggar and suitors alike. Above all, unlike his master, Argos does not survive to enjoy the final restoration of order. His death is in contrast to his master who overcomes beggar and suitors alike. His biological weakness is in contrast to his master who overcomes beggar and suitors alike. Above all, unlike his master, Argos does not survive to rejoice in the final restoration of order. His death eclipses his value as a hound and definitively closes the slightest connection, both emotional and intellectual, that links him to his master's superiority.[57] That is why we cannot talk of a dog acting like its master but rather of the master acting like the dog. This is the main message as regards animals and humans in the epic story of the *Odyssey*.[58]

One final remark worth noting. The lineage of Odysseus was believed to include Hermes, the god of speech and ancestor of the grandfather of Odysseus, who carried the significant name of the dog's wild relative, Autolycus, Odysseus' negative prototype.[59] Even if we do not draw the connection, the progression from the "very wolf" grandfather to the domestic dog Odysseus is tempting. Furthermore, Hermes became the beloved god

57. On disclosure and Odysseus' superiority Murnaghan 1987, 18 "a disguise...its success depends on its resemblance to the truth".

58. Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981, passim, e.g.,195, who also accepted a hierarchy in animals.

59. Russo 1992, ad. 19.394, p. 96 rendered with "the wolf himself", "the very wolf".

of the Iambic low world, especially in his capacity as the god who protected thieves (Hes. fr. 64 M.-W., Eustath. ad 19.416), and was also associated with dogs himself.[60] As we have already said, he endowed Pandora with the mind of the dog (*κύνεον νόον*) (*W & D* 67).

The post-epic negative presentation of Odysseus reintroduces the theme of his relationship with the dog but has completely departed from the Odyssean strategy of manipulating the animal for the benefit of man. Following other scholars, Nancy Worman who correctly traced pro-Iambic ideas and motifs in the *Odyssey* such as regards physical violence, insults, beating, saw in Odysseus one 'proto-iambic figure'. She maintained that Odysseus became the model for the debased and mocking outsider of the Iambic genre and its heir the Attic Comedy.[61] In both post-epic genres vile people are often depicted with negative dog-like qualities such as greediness and acquisitiveness, gluttony/voracity, deception and thievery and the biting secretly. If my interpretation of Odysseus as a dog is correct, then I cannot but agree with Aristotle's admiration for Homer's genius, and in this we can add the way he handles animals and especially the qualities of the dog for the purposes of the epic plot.

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60. Dogs feature in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 193-5: Lilja 1976, 41-42. Silver 1992, 146, 159-160. Wolkow 2007, 253. Capra & Nobili 2019, 79-92.

61. See above n. 35. On the appetitive guest, 35-40, the chapter on Iambos and the hungry outsider 40-48, on similarities with beggar in Hipponax 47-8, on Odysseus in Pindar as a "crucial embodiment of the abusive talker's oral rapacity (49) and in connection with *μαψυλάκας* and biting/*δάψεν* in *N*. 8.23-24 (50). On the negative use of dogs in the Iambic poets see Lilja 1976, 43-47.

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Athanassia Zografou

"… SINGLE-HOOFED HORSES FLEE" EXTRAORDINARY HORSES IN EPIC POETRY AND LATE MAGIC

As many scholars have not failed to demonstrate, horses are by far the most prominent animals in the *Iliad* as well as in the Trojan myth in general, a status that echoes their position in Indo-European poetry and culture.[1] Equine vocabulary and formulas abound throughout the *Iliad*, whereas horses lie at the heart of specific Iliadic episodes such as the *Doloneia*.[2]

The word *ἵππος* alone occurs hundreds of times in the *Iliad* without taking into account synonyms and compounds like *ἱπποδαμαστής, ἱππότης, κλυτόπωλος* or the very frequent references to chariots and charioteers (*κέντορες ἵππων*). Besides, the fact that the Iliadic Trojan war involves men and horses in almost equal measure is exemplified by the very syntax of the Homeric verse which often binds the two species together.[3] In some cases, we can even wonder if horses are metonymies for their mas-

1. The early Greek contact with the horses –from the 2nd millennium BCE (see, among others, Nilsson 1933, 79-80, Delebecque 1951, 217-230 – is reflected in the epics. The importance of horses during the 8th cent. BCE, is moreover illustrated by votive statuary through mainland Greece, see Osborne 1998, 24-27.

2. For horses in Homer, see Mitchell-Boyask 2011, 370-371; Platte 2014 and 2017 (chapter 1) demonstrates the Proto-Indo-European origin of some Homeric horse formulas (*ὠκέες ἵπποι as well as μώνυχες ἵπποι* sharing the same phonetic pattern *k…p*); concerning Iliadic horses –including horses in the *Doloneia* (Book 10)–, see also Mackie 2008, 61-90, Bierl 2012, 158-174 and Tsagalis 2020a, 93-97 and *passim*. For the *Doloneia*, see also *infra* in this chapter.

3. For instance, *Il.* 2, 465-466 (*αὐτὰρ ὑπὸ χθὼν / σμερδαλέον κονάβιζε ποδῶν αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἵππων*); 2, 761-762 (*τίς τὰρ τῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἔην σύ μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα / αὐτῶν ἠδ' ἵππων*); 10, 339 (*ἀλλ' ὅτε δή ῥ' ἵππων τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν κάλλιφ' ὅμιλον*) etc. See Delebeque 1951, 75-76.

ters –major Homeric heroes as Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, Diomedes and Aeneas– or the opposite.[4]

Iliadic horses transcend all distinct categories of beings –i.e. animals, gods and humans. Some of them are immortal, others are divinely raised or of divine origin; gods such as Apollo, Zeus and Poseidon, the wind Zephyrus and the Harpy Podarge are associated with these divine or semi-divine horses;[5] and then there were others that could occasionally express their will and feelings in a human-like way and even share human voice -this is the notorious case of Achilles' weeping and speaking horses.[6]

Horses are not only active participants, as chariot horses, in battle and in horse races embodying aristocratic heroism; they also feature as prizes, gifts and booty and often change hands passing regularly from Trojans to Achaeans[7] –with the exception of the extra-Iliadic Wooden Horse moving in the opposite direction.[8] In *Iliad* 1, when Achilles, in his quarrel with Agamemnon, points out that the reason he participates in the siege of Troy *is not* that the Trojans have plundered his horses[9] he reminds us, not only of the sack of Troy by means of the Wooden Horse, but also the crucial role of Laomedon's horses in the story of a "first sack of Troy" by Heracles

4. Platte 2017 (chapter 2) about "the potential of horses to share with heroes characteristics of essential identity".

5. *Il.* 2, 713-717; 5, 265-269; 23, 271-286 etc. Besides, Athena and Apollo are competing in *Iliad* 10, in relation to the abduction of the horses of Rhesus by Odysseus and Diomedes, cf. Platte 2017, 62-64, 68-71 and Tsagalis 2020b, 74. For Rhesus wondrous horses, see *infra* in this chapter.

6. Horses in grief: *Il.* 17.426–56, see Nicolay 2001, 54-6; Xanthos given human voice by Hera and prophesying the death of his master: *Il.* 19, 404-418, see Johnston 1992, Heath 1992a and 2005, 39-40, cf. Delebeque 1951, 35. In *Il.* 17, 448-449, in reverse, Zeus speaks to Achilles' horses. Achilles' mortal horse, Pedasos keeps step with Xanthos and Balios: *Il.* 16, 148-154.

7. For horse raiding, see Delebeque 1951, p. 72-73. For Aeneas' horses passing to Diomedes (*Il.* 5, 261-272), see Tsagalis 2020a, 100-102.

8. The Wooden Horse stratagem is mentioned in the *Odyssey*: 4, 271ff; 8, 492ff; 11, 523ff. Cf. Haft 1990, Mackie 2008, 87.

9. *Il.* 1, 154-157: plundering of horses is mentioned among good reasons for war (together with plundering of cattle or damaging of crops).

ἕνεχ' ἵππων Λαομέδοντος "for the sake of Laomedon's horses" (5, 640)[10] of which the sequence of events and aftermath is considered as something well known in the *Iliad*.[11] The equestrian exploit of Diomedes and Odysseus in the *Doloneia* also reflects the sack of Troy as it appears in the *Odyssey* and other epic poems.

The crucial role of horses in the fate of Troy did not go unnoticed by later writers. Plutarch, in the introduction of the *Life of Sertorius*, a military leader who played a major role in the first civil war of Rome (87-82 BCE), enumerates all the horses involved in the successive sacks of Troy –adding into the list the fatal horse responsible for a "third" sack of Troy by Charidemus of Oreus, who gained control of the city during a short period of time (360–359 BCE): "Ilium was taken by Heracles on account of the horses of Laomedon, by Agamemnon by means of what is called the wooden horse, and a third time by Charidemus, because a horse fell in the gateway –ταῖς πύλαις ἵππου τινὸς ἐμπεσόντος– thus preventing the Ilians from closing the gate quickly enough".[12]

It is not surprising that wondrous Iliadic horses left their traces even in incantations of later periods.[13]

Single-hoofed horses" in ritual texts

The various ways of interaction between ritual texts, oracles, spells and amulets, and Homer -Homeric verses, meter, vocabulary and/or themes during the Roman period- echo the numerous ways of the reuse of the Homeric material by writers of the Second Sophistic and Late Antiquity, from

10. Cf. Hes. fr. 43a, 61-65 (*ἕνε[χ' ἵπ]πων Λαομέδοντος*) and also 165, 10-11 (Merkelbach, West).

11. Laomedon did not keep his word to give to Heracles the horses, which Tros had received from Zeus, as a reward for the rescue of his daughter. So, Heracles sacked Troy. The poet feels free to reach for a section of this story at any time in the *Iliad*: *Il.* 5, 638-42 and 640-654; 14, 250-256; 15, 25-30; 20, 145-148, Scodel 2002, 147-149. See also Lang 1983; Edmunds 1997). Cf. Diod. Sic. 4, 32, 2; 9 etc.

12. Plut. *Vit. Sert*. 1, 3 (trans. Bernadotte Perrin).

13. For the reception of the *Doloneia* during antiquity, see Duć, Ebbot 2010, 89-151.

Lucian to Nonnos. Now, there has been a vigorous and intense debate about the exact degree of Homeric influence on the sources attesting these ritual uses, i. e. magical papyri, ostraca, amulets and medico-magical treatises.[14] I believe that the case of the Homeric equine formula *μώνυχες ἵπποι,* "Single-hoofed horses", can provide support for the view that in these specific ritual reuses, Homeric notions, motifs and even larger contexts and episodes, are in a variety of instances taken into account.

"Single-hoofed horses" have galloped through centuries to find a place: (a) in one of the earlier magical papyri, the frequently discussed Philinna Papyrus (1st cent. BCE-1st cent. CE, (b) in several places in the Great Papyrus of Paris (4th cent. CE).

An early anthology of healing spells

The surviving portion of the papyrus consists of two fragments possibly found in Fayoum: (a) the Amherst (P. Amh. 11) and the Berlin fragment (P. Berol. 7504).[15] These two pieces were identified as fragments belonging to the same roll by Maas in 1942[16] which seemingly represents a small part of a sort of anthology of healing spells divided by rubrics which identify author, origin and purpose.[17]

Fifteen very fragmentary lines are followed by at least three healing incantations, partly in hexametrical verse. The first one, *GEMF* 3, 16-20, is poorly preserved. The text printed in *PGM*^{2} XX restores the heading as *πρὸ]ς κεφαλῆ(ς) [πόνον λόγο]ς* "spell for a headache". However, Daniel

14. Homeric material is often found in magical hymns as well as in divination rituals and spells either protective or aggressive. According to Collins 2008 (cf. Gordon 2020), Homeric elements in such ritual texts are rather independent of their original context; a more subtle view regarding Homeric content is offered by Suarez 2011, Maltomini, Chronopoulou 2019, Zografou 2013 and 2020.

15. P. Amh 2.11 + BKT 5.2.144 (PBerolinensis inv. 7504), published by Grenfell, Hunt 1901 and Wilamowitz 1907 respectively.

16. Maas 1942, 33-38 ; the text is edited as *PGM*^{2} XX (2nd ed. revised by Henrichs), *SH*, 900 (p. 399) and recently *GEMF* 3 (Zellmann-Rohrer). Cf. *GMPT*, 258-9.

17. For the literary character of the papyrus (with regard to both layout and handwriting), see Faraone 2000, 198.

suggests that *κεφαλη* could be the first part of an abbreviated *ethnicum* indicating the nationality of the author: *Κεφαλη(νιδος*), "of woman of Kephalenia").[18]

This spell is followed by a second one, *GEMF* 3, 21-29, attributed to a Syrian woman from Gadara, which was intended for "burns/inflammations of all sorts". This one has attracted the major part of scholarly attention; more precisely, various cultural echoes –Greek, Egyptian, Mesopotamian– have been detected behind the text that basically consists of a small narrative –*historiola*- where "seven springs of wolves, seven of bears, seven of lions" –*ἑπτὰ λύ[κ]ων κρήνας, ἕπτ' ἄρ[κτων], ἑπτὰ λεόντων*– are mentioned together with "seven dark-eyed maidens" –*ἑπτὰ δὲ παρθενικαὶ κυ*[α]νώπιδες.[19]

Finally, a third spell for headaches is attributed to Philinna of Thessaly (*GEMF* 3, 29-35):

Φιλίννης Θε[cc]αλῆς ἐπαοιδὴ π[ρὸc]
κεφαλῆς π[ό]νον·
φεῦγ' ὀδύν[η κ]εφαλῆς, φεύγει δὲ [U –]
ὑπὸ πέτ[ρα]ῳ, φεύγουσιν δὲ [λύ]-
κοι, φεύγ [ουσι]ν δὲ μώνυχ̣ες [ἵπ]-
ποι [ca 6 *] πληγαῖc ὑπ̣[ ]*
[ca 10 *]ηθ̣ [* ca 10 *]*

Henrichs has reconstructed the text in hexametrical verse[20] as follows:

Φιλίννης Θε[σσ]αλῆς ἐπαοιδὴ π[ρὸς] κεφαλῆς π[ό]νον.
φεῦγ' ὀδύν[η] κεφαλῆς φεῦγε φθ̣[ίνουσ']ὑπὸ πέτ[ρα]ῳ·
φεύγουσιν δὲ [λύ]κοι, φεύγ̣[ουσι] δὲ μώνυχ̣ες [ἵπ]ποι
ἐ[σσύμενοι] πληγαῖς ὕπ' [ἐμῆς τελέας ἐπαοιδῆς]

18. Daniel 1988 : [(name)]c *Κεφαλη(νιδος) [ἐπαοιδὴ πρὸς]* [(ailment)]c.

19. See Ritner 1998 assuming a purely Egyptian origin and Faraone 1995 and 2018, 231-232 for a Near Eastern and Egyptian background, *cf. GEMF* 3 (p. 12).

20. Henrichs 1970.

The spell of Philinna the Thessalian for headache
Flee headache, flee vanishing under the rock
Wolves flee and single-hoofed horses flee
driven by strikes of my perfect spell.

Henrichs reads *φεῦγε φῳ̣[ίνουσ'*] (or *φεῦγε φθινύθουσ'*), "…go away – headache–vanishing (or diminishing)" instead of Maas' suggestion: *φεύγει λέων ὑπὸ πέτ[ρα]ν̣*, "…a lion flees under a rock"; as noticed by the former, the imperative form *φεῦγε* twice repeated is one of the earliest in such charms,[21] whereas the two singular imperatives (heaving the headache as the subject), sustain the symmetry between the two consecutive verses, both structured through anaphora (*φεῦγε – φεῦγε: φεύγουσιν δὲ – φεύγουσιν*). Besides, the reading *φεύγει λέων* (or *φεύγει τε λῖς*) assuming a lion hiding under a rock is strongly in opposition with the wolves and horses in "free motion" in the verse that follows, whereas the removal (*ἀποπομπή*) of the ailment itself into a deserted place is common in such healing spells.

I could add to these arguments that the participle *φῳ̣[ίνουσ'*] or *φθινύθουσ'* applied to the headache enhances the strong alliteration play in the spell (repetition of *phi* and *theta*) – the aspirated sound possibly thought as a puff of air giving an extra boost to drive away the problem.[22] The participle also introduces through its meaning the notion of a progressive decline of the disease, something that corresponds to the gradual disappearance of something as is graphically expressed in later amulets.[23]

21. Cf. Heim nos. 56-68, Aristotle, fr. 496 Rose (1886) and the Hellenistic lead tablet from Phalasarna (Western Crete), Athens, Nat. Mus. X9355 and Jordan 1992, 191-194 (re-edition of the text).

22. Blowing or spitting while reciting such spells is not uncommon, see *infra* in this chapter.

23. See, among others, Faraone 2012.

This is the spell of Philinna the Thessalian

Claiming origin from Thessaly is a guarantee of efficacy, since Thessaly was known throughout antiquity as the home of powerful *φαρμακίδες* (users of *φάρμακα*, i.e. material substances as well as incantations, curse) enveloped with the old and well-known expertise of Medea and famous for drawing down the moon and for many other extraordinary things.[24] Despite the doubts, attested from the 4th cent. BCE "every Thessalian girl with her magic incantations *–μάγοις ἐπῳδαῖς–* / can *fake* bringing down the moon from the heavens",[25] powerful spells used by other people are frequently given Thessalian origin by ancient authors. Thus, the authorship of the spell is surely meant to ensure originality and we could detect an analogous reasoning behind the Syrian, Gadarean, origin attributed to the female author of the previous spell.[26]

The name Philinna is very common in Thessaly, but also in Attica and other regions during the Classical and Hellenistic periods;[27] it was used by women of various social positions, including courtesans whose recourse to magic is a frequent theme of our ancient sources.[28] According to Dickie, the name Philinna in our spell might have aimed at identifying the author as the famous "Philinna of Larissa", the "dancing girl from Larissa" or simply "The Thessalian", a well-known figure of Hellenistic historiography.[29] She was the one of the two Thessalian companions of Philip II and the mother of Arrhidaeus, half-brother of Alexander the Great *–γεγονότα*

24. Among other sources, see Ar. *Nub.*, 749-752, Pl., *Grg* 513ª, Plin. *NH*, 30, 7, Luc., *Phars*. 6, 434-506., cf. Edmonds 2019, 19-21.

25. Sosiphanes of Syracuse (*TrGF* I, 92) is our earliest source to present Thessalian ritual as mere trick in his *Meleager* (fr. 1).

26. Luc. *Dial. meret.* 1, 1, 12 (*φαρμακίς…Θεσσαλάς τινας ᾠδὰς ἐπισταμένη καὶτὴν σελήνην κατάγουσα*) and 4, 4, 2 (*φαρμακίς. Σύρα τὸ γένος*), cf. Dickie 1993, 120-121, note 5, Faraone 2018, 393-394 and note 72.

27. According to *LGPN* database (name search))

28. One of the courtesans in *Dial. Meret.* is *Φίλιννα*.

29. Dickie 1993, 121-122.

μὲν ἐκ γυναικὸς ἀδόξου καὶ κοινῆς Φιλίννης.[30] Although this Philinna is nowhere called a sorceress, the fact that Thessaly was an important part of her identity, makes her a very probable candidate for the claimed authority of our spell.

Besides, her reputation as a prostitute could easily result in her being presented as a woman using her spells to win Philip's favor. Plutarch reports that a Thessalian woman was accused of using magic charms upon Philip II, in order seduce him –*Θεσσαλῆς γυναικὸς αἰτίαν ἐχούσης καταφαρμακεύειν αὐτόν*; although, in that case, this woman is not named, the anecdote demonstrates how closely connected the acquisition of a powerful man's erotic favor and the use of magic in popular thought[31] was. Accusations of witchcraft were much expected in a context of polygamy and succession rivalry. Always according to Plutarch, Alexander's mother Olympias too had used drugs and charms to induce mental problems to Philinna's son Arrhidaeus –*φαρμάκοις ὑπὸ Ὀλυμπιάδος κακωθέντα διαφθαρῆναι τὴν διάνοιαν*.[32]

Of course, given the tendency of later magical scrolls to ascribe magical recipes to fictitious authors, as attested, it is most likely that both the origin and the very name of Philinna –recalling the notorious Thessalian– have been chosen to reinforce the value of the spell.

Animal historiolae in healing hexameters from West to East

There are obvious similarities between these three short hexametrical incantations which apparently belong to the same collection. All of them present a title including the same elements: self-definition as ἐπαοιδή –if restorations are correct– (most probably false) attribution by mentioning both the name and the origin –(Kephalenia?), Thessaly and Gadara of Syria– to a female author, definition of the ailment to heal. We should note that female (fictitious) authorship is extremely rare in the whole collection

30. Plut. *Alex*. 77.
31. Plut., *Coniug. Praecept*. 23, 141b, cf. Ogden 1999, 24-25 and *passim*.
32. Plut. *Alex*. 77.

of the magical papyri, only attested in these three early cases. The incantations *per se* are rather short and composed in hexametrical verses.

Finally, at least the second and the third incantations, which are better preserved, include miniature narratives, *historiolae*, involving animals. More precisely, the incantation of the Syrian woman entirely consists of an *historiola* of five verses in past tense (*κατεκᾰ́θη* twice repeated etc.) in which wolves, bears and lions (all seven in number) play a role and the incantation of Philinna involves at least wolves and horses, –two species which in later medico-magical treatises feature as having rather opposite natures and qualities. The wolf's footprints or bones, for example could stop a horse or curb his speed.[33]

Philinna's *historiola* fills the width of two verses, with the verb φεύγουσι in the present, twice repeated, and the last line bringing us back to the ritual act undertaken by the practitioner. The dative πληγαῖς in the last line, connected to the participle *ἐσσύμενοι* (as proposed by Henrichs) or *ἰέμενοι*, "precipitated" (preferred by Preisendanz), gives the reason for which the animals of the narrative go away: they are driven by the spoken "whipping" of Philinna –implying that the headache also goes away at the same time.[34]

So, we are between the *similia similibus* pattern (*as the horses go, so does headach go away…*) and a sort of atemporal *historiola* relating a miraculous flight of animals, something like a fantasy an imaginary "first use and consecration" of an efficacious spell where the practitioner projects himself together with his client.

The flee-away formula is an incantation-type in which we frequently encounter animals –wolves, lions, dogs. They are mostly wild and dangerous animals, which may occasionally be presented as hunting away –*διώκειν*– the ailments –alternating in this role with divine figures as Per-

33. See *Geoponica* 15, 1, 6 (Beck), Africanus, *Cesti*, 34, D18 (*GCS*) for the use of a wolf's ankle ball to stop running horses and F12, 10 from the 7th *Kestos* which, moreover, refers to *Iliad* 10 (The *Cesti* is a 3rd cent. CE miscellany, dedicated to the emperor Alexander Severus, which includes all kind of recipes and magical tricks mostly about tactics, care of animals and warfare). Cf. Georgoudi 1990, 56, 138 and *Cesti. GCS*, XXIX (Introduction).

34. For boastful speech claiming efficacy for a spell, see Faraone 2013.

seus or Poseidon.[35] However, they are more often connected to the ailments they are meant to avert, considered by scholars either as bearing or embodying them.[36]

In our spell, special attention is given to the horses. The restored participle (*ἐ[σσύμενοι* in the final line –"single-hoofed horses flee driven by strikes of my perfect spell"– (*ἐ[σσύμενοι] πληγαῖς ὕπ' [ἐμῆς τελέας ἐπαοιδῆς*]), refers to all the animals previously mentioned; however, the noun *πληγαί*, "blows", which refers to the "verbal power" of Philinna's spell recalls the verb *πλήττειν* as well as the adjective *πλήξιππος* "'lasher of horses", commonly used for striking and driving of horses; *πληγαί* focuses on the horses rather on the wolves.[37] How do Homer's *μώνυχες ἵπποι* meet the needs of Philinna's spell?[38]

Thessalian Horses from Iliad to Medico-Magical Treatises

Homeric elements in Philinna's spell –such as meter and formula–, no doubt invest it with special authority. Together with the auto-approving expression *τελέας ἐπαοιδῆς*, typical of early hexametrical incantations, these elements point to an Archaic oral tradition of incantations. Could the author of Philinnas' spell have simply included a widely known Homeric equine formula to fill the end of the verse with a metrically convenient form?

35. See, for ex., Heim 1893, no 59 ("Flee *–φεῦγε–*, gout, Perseus is chasing you", inscribed on a stone amulet which shows Perseus armed with his harpe holding Medusa's head) and an Apsyrtus' spell, *C.H.G.* II, 31, 4 ("Blowing on it *–προσφυσῶν–*, say: So, flee *–φεῦγε–*, evil glanders, Poseidon pursues you"),

36. See Heim 1893, 479-482, Faraone 2012, 6.

37. Besides, horses are sometimes associated with watery and/or rocky landscapes (as in our spell) –or though as born from rocks. See Alcm. *Parth.*, *PMG* I, 46-49 comparing the beauty of Hagesichore with a "a horse, well-built, a prize-winner, with thundering hoofs *–καναχάποδα* which comes "from the dreams underneath a rock *–ὑποπετριδίων ὀνείρων–* with Nagy 1973 and Milićević Bradač 2003 386 and *passim*. I would like to thank Anton Bierl for his insightful comments on this topic.

38. Bonner 1944, 350, for ex., wonders what "the harmless *μώνυχες ἵπποι*… borrowed from Homer" are doing next to wild animals in Philinna's spell.

A likely motive for the addition of horses could be the desire to enhance the Thessalian flavor of the spell. It is true that throughout antiquity, the plain of Thessaly was known as the land not only of magical herbs and witches, but also of grazing horses: the superiority of the Thessalian horses was no less proverbial than that of the Thessalian witches.[39] Among other sources attesting to the fame of Thessalian horses**,** a playful subversive epigram of Lucilius (2nd cent. BCE) mentions both, Thessalian horses and Thessalian witchcraft, while adding an element drawn from the Trojan epic cycle. The poem hints at difficulties of the breaking in process of some horses belonging to the excellent Thessalian breed through comparison with the rigid Wooden Horse: "You have a Thessalian horse –*Θεσσαλὸν ἵππον*–, Erasistratus, but the drugs/incantations of all Thessaly –*ὅλης φάρμακα Θεσσαλίης*– cannot make him go, a real wooden horse that if Trojans and Greeks had all pulled together, would never have entered at the Scaean gate".[40] Here not only the use of Thessalian *φάρμακα* are mentioned as a possible means to gain control of the animal (a situation close to that of our spell), but the difficult Thessalian horse is compared to the Wooden Horse of Troy as well.

While Thessaly's fame for witchcraft cannot be traced further than the Classical period, the excellence of the horses and the horsemen of the region is a theme already present in the *Iliad* In this epic poem Homer refers to the chariot horses –both descendants from the wind Zephyurs and the Harpy Podarge–[41] of Achilles, whose homeland is Thessaly, as the finest, and next in line, are are Eumelus' Thessalian mares reared by Apollo when the god served for a year as the herdsman of Eumelus' father's, Admetos. The status of these horses is clearly demonstrated in the brief "Catalogue

39. See Mili 2015, 260, cf. 234-241 (for the Thessalian cult of Poseidon *Petraios* associated with the birth of the first horse). For horse on Thessalian coins see also Tsagari 2001. Cf. *infra* in this chapter for Bucephalas.

40. *Anth. Pal.* 11. 259, (trans. J. W. Mackail)

41. *Il.* 16.149-151 and 19, 400. This divine pair of steeds, capable, among other extraordinary achievements to leap over the ditch surrounding the camp of the Acheans (*Il.* 16, 380-381), were Poseidon's wedding gift to Peleus.

of the Best" (of the Achaeans).[42] According to this passage, the mares of Eumelus, reared by Apollo (2, 763-767) are "swift-moving like birds" and "bring with them the terror of the war". The only horses that can defeat them, in the horse-race of *Iliad* 23, are the semi divine horses that Diomedes had stolen from Aeneas.[43]

Many centuries later, ancient experts in horsemanship mention Thessalian horses, be them Iliadic or not, together with other extraordinary representatives of the species, as impressive samples of exceptional equine qualities. Sometimes Thessalian and Iliadic origin is associated; Africanus in the 7th *Kestos* –in the beginning of a "horse section"–, aiming to illustrate the cruciality of deciphering horse-related signs alludes to Xanthos' prophecy: "Homer portrayed the Thessalian horses as clairvoyant –*μαντικοὺς δὲ ἐποίησε τοὺς Θετταλούς*–, endowing them with a human voice…".[44]

Other veterinary treatises preserve anecdotes related to fabulous horses, such as the Thessalian Bucephalas, but also Achilles' divine pair of steeds -frequently compared to Alexander the Great's famous horse.[45] This is hardly surprising, since the figure of Achilles, one of the most important heroic figures related to Thessaly,[46] played a crucial role in the modeling of Alexander's semi-mythical status.

Works like the *Cesti* and Pseudo-Oppian's *Cynegetica* mingling magic

42. *Il.* 2.761–779 a passage between" the "Catalogue of Ships" (2.494-759) and the "Catalogue of Trojans and Allies" (2.815-877):

43. For Aeneas' horses see Tsagalis 2020a, 100-102.

44. Africanus, *Cesti* F 8, 1-4 (*GCS*).

45. Pseudo-Oppian, *Cyn*. 1, 222-235 (212-217 CE?) dressing a list of prodigious horses mentions Homeric horses such as the offspring of Boreas, the mares of Erichthonius and Achilles' Xanthus together with the Thessalian Bucephalas.

46. See among others, Erskine 2001, 228-231. According to Philostr. *Her*. 53, 16, Thessalians in alliance with the (dead) and deified Achilles, participate to Alexander's expedition against Persians. At Troy "they rode around his tomb all the horses which Alexander was bringing from Thessaly" and, as they depart, they "shouted from their horses for Achilles, with Balius and Xanthus as well, to join them against Darius". For the association between Bucephalas and Achilles' horses, see Collomia 2007, 155, 160, 165 and *passim.*

with medicine and practical advice are of a much later date than the healing spell of Philinna and are directed to different audiences. However, they confirm the role of both Thessalian and Homeric horses in practical and medico-magical texts throughout the centuries.

Philinna's horses although anonymous, could also be considered as both Thessalian and Homeric, one origin reinforcing the other; taken together they point to exceptional wondrous animals. If associated –at least in the mind of some practitioners– with Bucephalus and his difficulty to tame, they even seem less surprising next to wild animals. But, why should they be precisely "single hoofed horses"?

Equine Formulas - *μώνυχες ἵπποι / μώνυχας ἵππους*

Homeric horses are designated, on the basis of their feet, as *ὠκύποδες*, "swift-footed" (exclusively for horses) or more rarely *ποδώκεις* (used more often to describe swift men such as Achilles or Dolon), *χαλκόποδες*, "bronze-footed" and *ἀερσίποδες*, "high-stepping", but also, according to their hoofs as *μώνυχες* "single-hoofed" and *κρατερώνυχες*, "strong-hoofed".

The hoofs bearing the horse's full weight are crucial for the horse's running speed and endurance and this fact was well known in Antiquity. As an English proverb runs "no hoof no horse".[47] In later sources, magical remedies involving horses sometimes recommend inscribing magical words on the hoof.[48]

In contrast to *κρατερῶνυξ* –used also for mules as well as for wild beasts such as lions and wolves–,[49] *μῶνυξ*, does not attribute a particular characteristic to horses (horses are *all* single hoofed) and is exclusively used or horses, even for valuable ones, such as these belonging to named warriors,

47. The single hoof of the horse is considered as a natural privilege by Aristotle (*P.A*. II, 2, 663a 31). See Georgoudi 1990, 136 for un summary of ancient sources.

48. See, for ex., a recipe for taming a horse in Africanus, *Cesti* F 12, 22-23 (*GCS*) : *κοίλῳ ὁπλῆς προτέρου ποδὸς εὐωνύμου χειρὶ εὐωνύμῳ ἐγχάραττε γραφίῳ χαλκῷ*, cf. Georgoudi 1990, 326.

49. *Il*. 24, 277 (*ἡμίονοι*), *Od*. 6, 253; 10, 218 (*λύκοι…ἠδὲ λέοντες*).

above all, for the horses of Achilles and Diomedes. Some Iliadic uses of the adjective *μῶνυξ*, such as in the embedded story of Nestor in *Iliad* 11,[50] seem to be very old and, according to (C. H.) Gordon, the epithet "single-hoofed" could originate to East Mediterranean usage concerning the classification of quadrupeds.[51]

The formula *μώνυχες ἵπποι* (8) / *μώνυχας ἵππους* (24)[52] always in plural and always at the end of the verse, after the bucolic caesura, is second in frequency only to the formula *ὠκέες ἵπποι*. Although scholars often consider *μώνυχες* as broadly synonymous with *ὠκέες ἵπποι*, since both adjectives point at the running power of the horses, some Iliadic passages suggest that particular connotations can be associated with single-hoofed horses:

(a) the idea of horses' hoofs trampling and crushing fallen warriors and bodies, as in *Iliad* 20: "his single-hoofed horses trampled alike on the dead and on the shields (…) for drops smote upon them from the horses' hooves and from the tires".[53]

(b) and what is more interesting for us, the idea of the characteristic clatter of hoofs, as in the *Doloneia* when Nestor realizes that Rhesus' fabulous Thracian horses repeatedly designated as "single-hoofed" (*Il.* 10, 498, 537) are approaching to Achaeans' camp only from the sound of their gallop, without seeing them: "The thunder is beating against my ears of fast-running horses *–ἵππων μ' ὠκυπόδων ἀμφὶ κτύπος–* Might this only be Odysseus and strong Diomedes driving rapidly away from the Trojans their single-hoofed horses *–μώνυχας ἵππους*".[54] Faraone has suggested that the animals in Philinna's spell (the teeth or claws of a wolf … the pounding hooves of a wild horse) could correspond to the causes of the headache.[55] We couldn't exclude the possibility that the utterance of the spell was even

50. *Il.* 11, 708, 738.
51. Gordon 1955, 106.
52. See Beekes 1971, Platte 2014, 151.
53. *Il.* 20, 495-502.
54. *Il.* 10, 432-436, cf. *Hom. Hymn. Ap.* 270-271.
55. See *supra* in this chapter.

accompanied by the stamping of feet as well as other gestures mimicking the animals-symptoms' flight.

"Single-hoofed horses", evoking Iliadic battlefield horses loudly beating the ground with their solid hoofs and even crushing the bodies of the enemies, if not scary as wolves and lions, could be impressive and loud enough to justify their place in the Philinna's spell. Hence, the Homeric echoes of the formula not only fit well with the postulated Thessalian origin of the spell but could reinforce the analogy between the narrated situation and the actual problem (the headache) as well. In sum, they contribute to a pain-killing fusion of two different levels, a Homer/mythic-like and a ritual one.

"Single-hoofed horses" in the PGM IV and the Doloneia[56]

Of course, "single-hoofed horses" formula in Philinna's spell could not recall a single Iliadic passage. However, the mention of both horses and wolves, could make us think of the special role of animals in *Iliad* 10 (as well as in its reception):[57] Dolon, "The Crafty", volunteers for a spying mission driven by his greed for Achilles' horses (313-332), while Diomedes and Odysseus' clandestine operation concludes with the gain of Rhesus' semi-divine horses. Dolon wears the hide of a grey wolf,[58] while Diomedes wears a lion skin.[59] Finally, Diomedes and Odysseus are compared not

56. It is worth noticing here that verses from *Iliad* 10 are not unusual in the Magical Papyri, see Collins 2008, 219-222, Zografou 2013, 183-186. Suarez 2011, 540-541 has even formulated the hypothesis that the come from a previous anthology gathering verses from this Iliadic Book.

57. See, among many examples, the charioteer's dream of wolves in the tragedy *Rhesus*, 780-802, attribured to Euripides. For discussion about animals: Gernet 1936 and Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981, 95-131, Lissarrague 1980, 3-30, Bierl 2012, 151-155, Tsagalis 2020b, 69-71. Regarding the shared motifs in the *Doloneia*'s reception, see also Dué-Ebbot 2010, 119-151.

58. Which, after his being captured and killed, will be used as a landmark and finally offered to Athena by his murderers (*Il.* 10, 460-468 and 570-571).

59. See *Il.* 10, 254-272 for the dressing and arming of Odysseus and Diomedes with Dué-Ebbot 2010, 290-292: they put on leather skull cups –the one of Odysseus' being covered with boar's tusks.

only to dogs, but also to lions hunting at night: "They began to walk like two lions in the midst of the black night, through the slaughter of corpses, weapons and black blood" (297-298).

Doloneia's "Single-hoofed horses" and, more precisely these of the line 564, *ὣς εἰπὼν τάφροιο διήλασε μώνυχας ἵππους*, "He says (Odysseus) and he makes the single-hoofed horses cross the ditch", have an interesting "magical afterlife" in the Great Papyrus of Paris.[60] There, the verse is the first of a three-line unit including *Il.* 10, 564, 521, 572, cited three times, in different places. The unit firstly appears among the verses that seem to frame a recipe concerning a ritual for a face-to-face encounter with a god, known as "Mithras Liturgy"[61] or "Recipe for immortalization".[62] Six Homeric verses in whole are repeated together with other elements in two separate and largely overlapping sections before and after the "Mithras Liturgy". The use of the lectional signs in the papyrus has clearly shown that the set of the three verses from the *Doloneia* (in *PGM* IV, 471-473 and 821-823)[63] form one unit, though there is no title indicating its specific use.[64] The following list of contents corresponds to *PGM* IV, 466-834:

60. Bibl. Nat. suppl. gr. 574 (= *PGM* IV)

61. This name is given in 1903 by Dieterich who interpreted the text as originated from the mysteries of Mithras (Dieterich 1910). Despite the early criticism against this view, some scholars still recognize a Mithraic component crucial to its understanding, see, for ex. Meyer 2012, cf. Betz 2003 who sees the text rather as an adaptation of Mithraic material to Egyptian and Greek concepts. Zago 2010 explores its Pythagorean background, while others, as Suarez 2020, distinguish various cultural trends unified to serve an oracular use.

62. According to the text itself *PGM* IV, 741, 747, 771 (*ἀπαθανατισμός*).

63. "He says and he makes the single-hoofed horses cross the ditch / and men gasping out their lives amid the terrible slaughter / and they washed off in the sea the abundant sweat".

64. See Lidonnici 2003, 156-171, Zago 2017, 202-203 cf. Maltomini, Chronopoulou 2019, 187-191.

<Θυμοκάτοχον·>

'*τολμήσεις Διὸς ἄντα πελώριον ἔγχος ἀεῖραι;*'
(*PGM IV*, 468 =*Il.* 8, 424)
<Πρὸς φίλους·>
'*αἰρείτω, μὴ χάρμα γενώμεθα δυσμενέεσσιν*'
(*PGM* IV, 470 = *Il.* 10, 193)

'*ὣς εἰπὼν τάφροιο διήλασε μώνυχας ἵππους*'
'*ἄνδρας τ' ἀσπαίροντας ἐν ἀργαλέῃσι φονῇσι*'
'*αὐτοὶ δ' ἱδρῶ πολλὸν ἀπενίζοντο θαλάσσῃ*'
(*PGM* IV, 471-473 = *Il.* 10, 564, 521, 572)

'*τλῆ μὲν Ἄρης, ὅτε μιν Ὦτος κρατερός τ' Ἐπιάλτης.*'
(PGM IV, 474=*Il.* 5, 385)

PGM IV, 475-820 main section of the "Liturgy of Mithras"

'*ὣς εἰπὼν τάφροιο διήλασε μώνυχας ἵππους·*'

'*ἄνδρας τ' ἀσπαίροντας ἐν ἀργαλέοισι φόνοισι*'
'*αὐτοὶ δ' ἱδρῶ πολλὸν ἀπενίζοντο θαλάσσῃ·*'
(*PGM* IV, 821-823 = *Il.* 10, 564, 521, 572)

'*τολμήσεις Διὸς ἄντα πελώριον ἔγχος ἀεῖραι.*'
(*PGM* IV, 824=*Il.* 8, 424)

historiola with *voces magicae* (*PGM* IV, 825-829)

'*τλῆ μὲν Ἄρης, ὅτε μιν Ὦτος κρατερός τ' Ἐπιάλτης.*'
(*PGM* IV, 830=*Il.* 5, 385)

<Θυμοκάτοχον·>

'τολμήσεις Διὸς ἄντα πελώριον ἔγχος ἀεῖραι.'
(*PGM* IV, 832 =*Il.* 8, 424)

<Πρὸς φίλους·>
'*αἰρείτω, μὴ χάρμα γενώμεθα δυσμενέεσσιν.*'
(*PGM* IV, 834 =*Il.* 10, 193)

Given the intricacy of this case I will not discuss it in this paper.[65]

The Homeric Assistant

It would be easier to have a glimpse at the same tristich as it appears embedded in another recipe of the same papyrus entitled *Τρίστιχος Ὁμήρου*

65. The function of the Homeric verses regarding the recipe *per se* (*PGM* IV 475-820) flanked by them has been a very controversial question: several scholars consider the verses as autonomous and/or partly resulting from a copyist's mistake, while others closely associate them with the main text; Stoholski 2007, 80-91, for ex., reads them through contextual involvement with Athena and Diomedes and concludes that they constitute a warning for the practitioner, while Zago 2010, 43, 137, 241-244 and 2017, 201-204, think of them both as a "memorization exercise" for the scribe/creator of the recipe and as a sort of phylactery for the text itself.

πάρεδρος, "Homeric Assistant of Three Verses";[66] here, the text describes the fabrication and consecration of a kind of amulet: a lamella inscribed with the three verses in question. The fields in which the "Assistant" can be helpful are registered: escape/crossing of boundaries, races, athletic competition, fight, litigation, prophecy –from a dying man–, erotic conquest, protection from magic as well as from any human, divine or animal adversary;[67] the boastful enumeration concludes: "You will have glory and you will be happy, you will receive inheritances, you will succeed, you will overcome poisons, you will break spells and you will defeat your enemies".[68]

Let's have a look at each of the three verses:

(i) *ὣς εἰπὼν τάφροιο διήλασε μώνυχας ἵππους* (*Il.* 10, 564)

Odysseus has just answered -ὣς εἰπὼν- to Nestor, who expressed his admiration for the horses stolen from Rhesus comparing them to rays of the sun and suggesting that they are a god's gift, that a god could easily give even better horses. Then, according to our verse, he made the horses of Rhesus pass the ditch surrounding the Achaean camp, what seals, in this context, the success of the mission and the return to safety.[69] However, the crossing in both directions of this crucial threshold is often referred to, in the *Iliad* as a very dangerous moment.[70] It is mentioned twice in the opening of the *Doloneia* (*Il.* 10, 194 and 198).[71] Thus, the verse, in its specific original context surely focus on the wondrous horses, while in the broader

66. The term *πάρεδρος* refers to a sort of partnership, a lasting contract of collaboration usually between the performer and a superhuman / divine element rather than to a special kind of gods, see, among others, Ciraolo 1995, Scibilia 2002 and Pachoumi 2016, 39-61.

67. This is in perfect accordance with other rituals regarding πάρεδροι, whose acquisition opens the way to countless benefits, see *PGM* I, 96-128.

68. *PGM* IV, 2172-2178.

69. Duć-Ebbot 2010, 375-356 *ad loc*.

70. For the difficulty of the Trojans to cross the ditch, see, for ex., *Il.* 12, 49-51, 16, 368-371, cf. 15, 355-357 (where Apollo bridges the edges of the ditch).

71. *Il.* 10, 194: *ὣς εἰπὼν τάφροιο διέσσυτο: τοὶ δ' ἅμ' ἕποντο*, where Nestor exits from the Achaean camp for the night meeting is moreover reminiscent of *Il.* 10, 564 with the exception of the horses.

Iliad's setting, could apply either to the beginning or to the end of a dangerous expedition.

(ii) *ἄνδρας τ' ἀσπαίροντας ἐν ἀργαλέῃσι φονῇσι* (*Il.* 10, 521)

Here, we dive in the heart of the adventure. Diomedes, constantly assisted by Athena, has just killed the Thracian king Rhesus as well as several of his men, when Hippocoon, the cousin of Rhesus, alerted by Apollon, notices the absence of the horses and faces the spectacle full of gore described by the verse;[72] there is no verb here and, syntactically, this line cannot be correctly adjusted neither to the one that follows nor to the one that precedes. However, the succession of the first two verses, although without syntactic coherence, could indicate a rather logical sequence from the passing of a crucial threshold to the heart of the bloody battle.

(iii) *αὐτοὶ δ' ἱδρῷ πολλὸν ἀπενίζοντο θαλάσσῃ* (*Il.* 10, 572)

The final line belongs the end of the adventure according to the *Doloneia*: Diomedes and Odysseus have a bath in the sea –before jumping into a bathtub, for a hot bath and expressing their gratitude το Athena). According to the Iliadic text they "washed their bodies and refreshed their hearts" (*Il.* 10, 575). The bath formalistically denotes the return from battle; moreover, the mention of the seawater, and even in relation to the previous verse describing the results of the slaughter, increases its potential ritual character.[73]

Thus, the three verses approximately summarize the exploit by evoking the crossing of the ditch, the horses, the slaughter and the definitive ending through purification.

72. It is interesting to notice that in *Il* 10, 198-199, a similar spectacle of fallen corpses is described just after the crossing of the ditch: *τάφρον δ' ἐκδιαβάντες ὀρυκτὴν ἑδριόωντο / ἐν καθαρῷ, ὅθι δὴ νεκύων διεφαίνετο χῶρος* (where an effort is implied to find a clean spot among corpses for the night meeting), *cf. Il* 10, 297-298: *βάν ῥ' ἴμεν ὥς τε λέοντε δύω διὰ νύκτα μέλαιναν / ἄμ φόνον, ἂν νέκυας, διά τ' ἔντεα καὶ μέλαν αἷμα*, describing the departure of Diomedes and Odysseus.

73. Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981, 118, Grethlein 2007; for the purifying power of the sea, see Parker 1983, 226-227, 286, n. 26, 307.

It is possible to establish correspondences between specific words/concepts (taken literally or metaphorically) included in the verses and uses of the "Assistant". As Collins has rightly noticed, the "horses with massive hooves" could be a perfect fit for the races of the horses –*PGM* IV, 2153-2154, *…ὁμοίως δὲ / καὶ ἡνίοχος φορῶν τὴν λεπίδα*–, while the crossing of the ditch could apply to the use of the charm in case of escape –*PGM* IV, 2145-2147, *ἐάν τις ἀποδράσας ….*[74] Similarly, the throbbing moribund of the second verse would be appropriate for the interrogation of a dying or dead person included in the uses of the "Assistant" –*PGM* IV, 2147-2148 and 2157–2159. Finally, the washing off the sweat in the third verse could be related to the ritual instruction regarding sprinkling with sea water.[75]

However, the results promised by the recipe go beyond any specific analogies we might spot.[76] Whatever the effect of these obvious correspondences on the choice of the three verses, we are allowed to look for additional motivation for their selection. Several factors, (i) success/victory as the common denominator of the numerous effects of the "Assistant" coinciding with *Doloneia's* ultimate goal, (ii) the header "Homeric Assistant…", recalling Athena's help to their favorites in the *Doloneia*, (iii) the fact that the tristich calls to mind the essentials of the *Doloneia* story even in an abstract way, rather incite to take into account not only the wording but also the referential power of the verses. As Suarez has justly observed, although the verses of the tristich do not strictly recall their immediate context, they certainly bring to mind *Doloneia*'s themes and atmosphere,[77] i.e, clandestine action in the dark, danger and death. As laid down by Suarez: *En su conjunto, podríamos decir que la acción se inicia en el dominio del Sueño y concluye en el de la Muerte.*

74. Cf. *PGM* IV, 2148.

75. Collins 2008, 222 also finds that the sexual connotations of "sweat" as we can find them in the Magical Papyri would be linked to the use of the "Assistant" in personal life.

76. According to Suarez 2011, 539, after *PGM* IV, 2167, the text goes on with a metaphorical extension of the previous uses.

77. Suarez 2011, 236-238 and *passim* for the special place of the *Doloneia* in later poetry, ritual and magic. Cf. Maltomini, Chronopoulou 2020, 190-193.

A thorough evaluation of the elements that emerge from the broader context of its one of the three verses –such as the aura of connotations that surrounds the protagonists of the action, Odysseus and Diomedes–[78] is not within the scopeof the present study.[79] I will only briefly comment the mention of the "single-hoofed horses". Horses are not only prominent in every stage of the Trojan myth –from the suitors' oath of Tyndareos, sworn upon the parts of a sacrificed horse[80] to the Wooden Horse episode–, they are, more precisely involved in any tradition relating the end of Troy. In *Iliad* 10, they are not only central, but also provide –together with other elements– a crucial link between the night raid of the *Doloneia* and the extra-Iliadic sack of Troy directed by Odysseus as much cunning intelligence as the *Doloneia*.[81] According to other traditions, reflected in *Iliad* 10, if Rhesus' horses had taken part in the fight, the fate of Troy would have been quite different.[82] Thus, exceptional the horses of the *Doloneia* –that of Achilles the desire of which activates Dolon[83] but, most of all, the dazzling horses of Rhesus–[84] significantly contribute to the way this Book brilliantly reflects the ultimate goal of the Iliadic war. Whoever assembled these verses together in this magical amulet-like "Assistant" would certainly aspire to ritually exploit this amazing potential.

78. See, among others, Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981, 95-132, Wathelet 1989 and Stoholski 2007, 80-91.

79. Even less do I aspire to read as a whole this recipe which includes discourses and rituals of various cultural origins; among other elements, invocations are addressed to "master of all things", Aion of Aions, Cosmokrator, Ra and Pan (see *PGM* IV, 2180-1197).

80. Paus. 3, 20, 9. Cf. Burgess 2001, 21-22, Tsagalis 2020a, 94.

81. See Haft 1990, 50-53, note 52 and *passim*.

82. Pindar fr. 262 (Snell-Maehler), ΣbT *Il.* 10, 435, 3.93 Erbse ; SG *Il.* 10. 435 (Dindorf) and also *Rhesus* 447-450. Cf. Fenik 1964, 26, Dué-Ebbot, 90-106, Bierl 2012, 159.

83. *Il.* 10, 319-324.

84. I've left aside here the symbolic value of Rhesus and his horses, seen as solar entities. For this aspect and the whole layer of folktale motifs underlying *Iliad* 10, see Bierl 2012, 163-172; the "solar" reading of *Doloneia* could be important in a magical context, especially concerning the verses flanking "Mithras Liturgy"; for the importance of a high solar deity in the Magical Papyri, often represented as a charioteer and identified with several gods including Mithras, Iao, Sabaoth and Apollo, see Pachoumi 2016, 63-86).

To conclude, "singe-hoofed horses" in the miniaturized *Doloneia* of the tristich "Assistant", even if extracted from their immediate context and adjusted to the needs of a ritual recipe, can be seen as deeply "Homeric" in a broader sense.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Cesti GCS: M. WALLRAFF, C. SCARDINO, L. MECELLA, C. GUIGNARD (eds), *Iulius Africanus. Cesti. The extant fragments*, english trans. by W. Adler. Berlin-Boston, 2012.

CHG I-II: E. ODER and C. HOPPE (eds), *Corpus hippiatricorum Graecorum*, I:, *Hippiatrica Berolinensia*, Leipzig, 1924; II: *Hippiatrica Parisina*, *Hippiatrica Cantabrigiensia*, *Additamenta Londinensia, Excerpta Lugdunensia*, Leipzig 1927 (repr. Stuttgart, 1971).

GEMF: C. A. FARAONE, S. TORALLAS TOVAR (eds), *Greek and Egyptian Magical Formularies. Texts and Translation* I, Berkeley, 2022.

GMPT: H. D. BETZ (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*, Chicago, 1992 [1986[1]].

LGPN: *The Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* (https://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/)

PGM: K. PREISENDANZ (ed.), *Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* I-II (rev. A.Henrichs), Stuttgart, 1974[2].

PMG: D. L. PAGE, *Poetae Melici Graeci*, Oxford, 1962.

SH: H. LLOYD-JONES, P. PARSONS (eds), *Supplementum Hellenisticum*. Berlin, 1983.

SM II: R. W. DANIEL, F. MALTOMINI, F., *Supplementum Magicum* I-II, Opladen, 1992.

TrGF: B. SNELL, S. RADT and R. KANNICHT, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Göttingen 1971-2004).

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III. HOMERIC HUMAN CHARACTERS AND THEIR LATE AND MODERN RECEPTION

III. ΟΜΗΡΙΚΟΙ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟΙ ΧΑΡΑΚΤΗΡΕΣ ΚΑΙ Η ΥΣΤΕΡΗ ΚΑΙ ΝΕΟΤΕΡΗ ΠΡΟΣΛΗΨΗ ΤΟΥΣ

Giuseppe Zanetto

PLAYING WITH HOMER: SAPPHO'S BROTHER'S POEM AS AN ILIADIC PHANTASY

Starting from the recently published Sapphic "Brothers Poem,"[1] I would like to touch on two points. Firstly, I will discuss the nature of the text, the relationship of the speaking "I" (i.e. 'Sappho' as a character) with the "real" Sappho and the meaning of the song in its connection with the other fragments of the "Charaxos series". Secondly, I will explore the source of inspiration, the chain of thoughts and images which nourish Sappho's poetic creation; in other words, I will try to identify the literary tradition from which the poet draws her material to construct the story, the characters, the scenario, the sequence of times and events.

The poem's broad content is clear enough: an "I" (who is the speaking voice) addresses someone and tells him (or her)[2] that the fate of Charaxos (his safe return home, his ship and his merchandise) depends on the gods: the only option is to send the speaking "I" to the temple of Hera to pray the goddess and ask her for help; in fact, if the gods are in favour, human condition rapidly improves. Charaxos, on the other hand, is not the only resource of the house: Larichos is now in the right age to "become a man" and play a pivotal role in family life.

From the first publication of the text scholarly discussion has focused on the historical credibility (or lack thereof) of Charaxos' and Doricha's story: does the love affair of the Lesbian boy and the fascinating Egyptian courtesan have a historical (and biographical) background? Or is the entire

1. Sapph. fr.10; Sapphos' fragments are quoted according to Neri 2021; for Alcaeus' fragments I adopt the edition of E.-M. Voigt (Amsterdam 1971).

2. It's not clear whether the "I" speaks to a man or to a woman: discussion in Neri 2021, 566.

"romance of Charaxos" a literary creation in which the characters play a (fictitious) role that follows a poetic rationale?

The latter approach seems largely to prevail. Many scholars[3] connect the "Brothers Poem" to the "poetics of fictionality" which informs many archaic Greek songs: one has only to think of the "mimetic" nature of the iambic "I". The series of Sappho's songs on Charaxos (frr. 5, 10, 15, 17) has been compared –and in fact *can* be compared– to Archolochus' iambics on Neobule's family.[4]

When Archilochus addresses his circle of *hetairoi* and tells them the story of 'his' failed marriage with capricious 'Neobule', he is simply doing his job as an iambic poet: he is dispensing praise and blame, and in so doing he aims to give wise advice to his audience. The topic is marriage and the choice of a bride: the story of Lycambes and Neobule shows that a young man must be very careful and avoid marrying into a family whose members don't respect social values such as honesty and fidelity. We don't know if the real Archilochus ever met a real Lycambes or a real Neobule, but it doesn't matter. In the "Lycambides songs", the performer (the "I" who speaks) plays the stock role of the 'frustrated groom' who had a bad experience and wants to share it with his friends. 'Archilochus' is a kind of pet name: he is the "big brother", and his "Bigbrotherhood" invests him with authorial dignity.

On the other hand, in the real life of Greek archaic society a happy marriage is perceived as something requiring attention. Semonides' poem (fr. 7 West) on women was surely composed to warn young men against hasty choices. In the *Works and days*, Hesiod provides a kind of handbook, complete with rules designed to secure a good wife.[5] The point of view of these poems is of course strictly masculine; they conform to a male gaze on women which, presumably, was largely adopted in male symposia. And the

3. Lardinois 2016, 185-187 is particularly explicit on this point.
4. Martin 2016, 123-126; Lardinois 2016, 184.
5. Hes. *Op*. 695-705.

male symposium was surely the set of the Archilochean performances on the bad wife Neobule.

The frame which we can imagine for the "Charaxos songs" is both similar and different. First of all, we must be conscious that our reconstruction of the episode (and of the poetic sequence) is hypothetical. We have the nearly complete text of the "Brothers Poem", where Charaxos is named (but he is not referred to as a brother of the speaking "I") and we are told that his return home is awaited with anticipation and should be the object of solemn supplications to Hera. A prayer to goddess Hera seems to be the core issue of fr. 17, and we are obviously tempted to think that it is the same prayer (promised in the first text and fulfilled in the second); but the surviving portion of fr. 17 doesn't mention Charaxos or the aim of the prayer. We also have the large fr. 5, which seems to be a typical *propemptikòn*: a prayer to the Nereids (who are addressed in the opening) for the safe return home of a brother (*τὸν κασίγνητον*, v. 2); the "I" expresses her desire that he may atone for any wrong he might have done in the past, that he may fulfil his desires and give honour to his sister. The train of thought allows us to conclude that the speaking voice is the sister of the mentioned brother, but this is not explicit; nor is the name of Charaxos pronounced, although in the final stanza an invocation to Aphrodite is compatible with a love affair (but the goddess is of course also a care giver for mariners in distress). Finally, we have the very small fr. 15, which, almost certainly, features Doricha's name[6] in connection with a prayer to (probably) Aphrodite: the speaking voice wishes that Doricha may experience the goddess' harshness and may not boast that she has convinced him (Charaxos?) to come back to her a second time.

This is the evidence provided by Sappho's fragments. We also have a series of testimonies coming from later sources, in particular Herodotus II 135, Strabo XVII 1. 33, Athenaeus XIII 596bc.[7] The information given by

6. Δ]ωρίχα, v. 11.

7. See testimonia 254 a-h in Neri 2021, 508-509.

these writers, although with some discrepancies, allows us to reconstruct a coherent series of events: Charaxos, Sappho's brother, who used to travel by sea in the East Mediterranean as a wine trader, met a fascinating courtesan named Doricha (or Rhodopis) in Naucratis, fell in love with her and spent a lot of money to enfranchise her. As he came back home, his sister blamed him (and her) in her poems.

It's inevitable to connect this account with the allusions scattered in Sappho's fragments and put the two sources of information in dialogue. This is exactly what scholars have tried to do, and the result is the story of a young man who causes serious troubles to his family (one of the most prominent families of archaic Lesbos) because of his insane behaviour and long absence, which in turn triggers his sister's anxiety, prayers and reproaches.

The testimony of Herodotus is very important,[8] because it shows that by the mid-fifth century at least one (but probably more) "Charaxos song" was sung in Athens; that Sappho's authorship was recognised; and that the story was thought to be credible.[9] The survival of the "Charaxos songs" in an Attic milieu (that is, in the Athenian symposia) can be explained only if we think that these songs became popular in male Lesbian symposia at a very early date and rapidly spread elsewhere in Greece.[10] The success they had in Athens was due to the fact that they were interpreted as regarding the real life of Sappho. This was functional to the increasing tendency to speculate on the poets of the past, to look at them as symbolic figures and to provide them with full biographies. Massimiliano Ornaghi has shown that the biographic interpretation of Archilochus' iambic po-

8. Hdt. II 135: "Rhodopis came to Egypt to work, brought by Xanthes of Samos, but upon her arrival was freed for a lot of money by Charaxos of Mytilene, son of Scamandronymus and brother of Sappho the poetess. […] Charaxos, after giving Rhodopis her freedom, returned to Mytilene. He is bitterly attacked by Sappho in one of her poems".

9. Lardinois 2016, 168-169: "This [i.e. Herodotus' testimony] shows that by the end of the fifth century BCE songs about Charaxos were circulating in the Greek world and were attributed to Sappho"; see also Nagy 2016, 452; Gribble 2016, 35.

10. Bowie 2016, 148-151.

ems (and the consequent vision of him as a "poète maudit") is an "invention" of fifth century Athens, when the image of Archilochus is influenced by political ideology.[11] We can suspect that, like the "Lycambides songs", the "Charaxos songs", too, were re-performed in Attic symposia and contributed to create a *bios* of Sappho.

If this is true, we can accept the idea that the "romance of Charaxos" originates in a cultural context where the fictionality of archaic iambic poetry goes unnoticed. However, we're still left with the problem of explaining the original function (meaning, message, audience, occasion) of these songs.

In the last decades, the opinion that a consistent part of Sappho's poetry can be interpreted under the category of 'iambics' has gained traction. The notion of an 'iambic' Sappho, of course, doesn't apply to the metre, but to the mode and the occasion. Ewen Bowie argues that many of Sappho's poems were *ab initio* composed for male symposia in Lesbos, where the poet was an appreciated solo singer and was demanded for performances on many occasions, both private and public.[12] Richard Martin emphasises the iambic colour of many of Sappho's extant fragments and shows that the aggressive mockery, which is the hallmark of the iambic genre, can be traced also in some passages of the "Brothers Poem".[13] He quotes an interesting statement by Antonio Aloni who extends to Sappho and her audience what can be generally said about abusive poetry in archaic Greek society: "Iambic aggression helps to strengthen the identity and the solidarity of the audience, which in many cases was not restricted to the female group, but extended at least to the males in the family group".[14]

In light of these considerations, I think that the "Charaxos poems" can be interpreted as a cycle of songs performed in semi-public occasions (in the presence of men and women) and intended to tackle –in 'iambic mode'

11. Ornaghi 2009, 232-244.
12. Bowie 2016, 152-157.
13. Martin 2016, 110-118.
14. Aloni 2001, 29.

(that is to say with extended adoption of the fictionality and systematic use of the blame / praise model)– a topic which resonates with the real experience of an insular society, namely the prolonged absence of men, travelling by sea for trade or military duties, and the waiting attitude of the women who remain at home and are fully aware of the dangers connected with navigation and long stays abroad.

This is particularly true for Lesbos in the seventh and sixth century. As Dimitrios Yatromanolakis has extensively shown,[15] many families of the Mytilenean aristocracy in this period are engaged in an intensive activity of trading, on routes which extend from Lesbos to the major trade centres of the North Aegean Sea, of the Black Sea and of the East Mediterranean Sea. Lesbians have a strong presence in Naucratis, where Charaxos is said to have met Doricha and have fallen in love with her.

From Strabo we learn that the reason for Charaxos' frequent trips to Naucratis was the commerce of Lesbian wine.[16] This is credible, because wine was one the most renowned products of the island and it was usual for the aristocratic families to give away the surplus of their production in exchange for luxury goods which could contribute to the prestige of the house.

What happened to Charaxos could have happened to any young man of Lesbian high society. And this is exactly what gives sense to our "Charaxos songs". Through a fictional situation and fictional characters Sappho gives voice to the real anxieties and the real fears which Lesbian women felt every time that a male member of their family delayed coming back from a sea trip. Charaxos is the character of a song type, the song of the "merchant-gone-to-sea" and of the prayer for his safe return;[17] as An-

15. Yatromanolakis 2007, 335-336.

16. Strabo XVII 1.33: "[…] a courtesan whose name, according to Sappho the poetess, was Doricha. She was the mistress of her brother Charaxos, who traded to the port of Naucratis with wine of Lesbos".

17. Obbink 2016, 212; O'Connell 2018, 252.

dré Lardinois notices,[18] his mention is always connected with his absence, we never hear of other aspects of his life: his timeless status is that of an "expat" (exactly as 'Archilochus' is ever young while 'Neobule' is an ever ageing figure).

Cecilia Nobili has shown how Greek literature from the archaic to the Greek-Roman age reports stories of rich merchants who undergo the charm of greedy courtesans, are unable to resist their exorbitant requests and waste their fortunes.[19] It's a traditional *topos*, which may have its roots in folkloric tales, but no doubt resonates with real-life situations. A fragment attributed to Alcaeus stresses the disastrous consequences of intimacy with prostitutes: "what one gives to a prostitute might as well be thrown into the waves of the grey sea […] if a man keeps company with prostitutes, these things happen to him: he must inevitably lose his money and suffer shame and terrible misery".[20] The poet is alluding to the dangers faced by sea travellers, as the mention of a ship at line 21 seems to suggest. Archilochus, too, says that "often money which has been accumulated obol by obol with great efforts goes down into the guts of a prostitute".[21]

We can conclude that the "Charaxos songs" refer to a scenario which, far from being fantastic, fits into the real life of archaic Lesbos: we have to imagine people who are in great distress because a male member of their family, whose trade activity is an important income source, fails to return home, while rumours circulate about his dangerous liaison with a greedy courtesan. The panic generated by his prolonged absence has to do with the potential economic damage (the loss of the ship with its cargo); but his indecent behaviour could also discredit the public image of the family. It's the same fear expressed by 'Archilochus' in the Cologne Epode, as he says

18. Lardinois 2016, 185.

19. Nobili 2016, 13-20.

20. Alc. fr. 127b, 26-27, 29-31.

21. Arch. fr. 302 West^2 (the original text is lost but we have a paraphrase by Ael. *Var. Hist.* IV 14).

that marrying 'Neobule' would make him a laughing stock in the eyes of the neighbours.[22]

'Archilochus' is the "big brother" who, having met a Neobule, must tell his friends his misadventure to make them more cautious about marriage; similarly, 'Sappho' is the sister who, distressed at the unacceptable behaviour of her brother, expresses her reactions in a series of songs, composed to be performed in the presence of the enlarged family. Her purpose is to stress –through the negative example of Charaxos– the importance of the traditional values of devotion and fidelity in regulating the life of an aristocratic house. The ultimate goal of these songs, in both cases, is to reinforce the internal cohesion of a group and to strengthen its sense of identity.

In the whole series of the "Charaxos songs" Sappho plays the role of the sister. We don't know if the poet had any siblings; maybe she did (later sources seem to be well informed on this point),[23] but in the *mise-en-scène* of the performance her sisterly role is in keeping with the situation. In the Greek world, it's a typical task of women to take care of family bonds and do whatever it takes to avoid distress in the house.[24] If a situation is so difficult as to require divine intervention, women are supposed to prey the gods and offer them sacrifices. A clear example is *Odyssey* 4.759-766,[25] where Penelope, who is in great distress because both Odysseus and Telemachus are absent (and she has just learnt that the suitors have a plan to kill her son), follows Eurycleia's suggestion and asks Athena to protect the boy. 'Sappho' will go to Hera's temple to do the same.

As scholars have noticed,[26] 'Sappho''s sisterly role allows her to cut deep into domesticity. The "Charaxos songs" may be conceived as a poetic microcosm designed to reproduce the intimacy of a house by recording

22. Arch. fr. 196a, 33-34 West^2.

23. Lardinois 2016, 169; see testimonia 252, 253, 254 in Neri 2021, 504-505, 508-509.

24. A good example is Pamphile (in Menander's *Epitrepontes*), who is truly heroic in her efforts to save her marriage and to avoid a conflict between her husband and her father.

25. Gribble 2016, 47.

26. Bierl 2016, 306; Nagy 2016, 489-492.

female voices and reactions. By assuming the identity of Charaxos' sister, 'Sappho' enters the dimension of sorority, which gives her a privileged position; her discourse can display a very wide range of colours and tones, which correspond to a variety of feelings: sweetness, love, jealousy, concern, disappointment, annoyance.

Sorority is a dimension that 'Sappho' shares with famous sisters of the Greek myth. Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi compares the 'Sappho' of our fragments with Nausicaa and Electra.[27] In the famous scene that opens *Odyssey* book 6 Nausicaa says to her father that it's her duty to go and wash the clothes of her brothers, who want to wear clean clothing when they dance.

> *you have five dear sons who are grown in the palace,*
> *two of them married, and the other three are sprightly bachelors,*
> *and they are forever wanting clean fresh clothing, to wear it*
> *when they go to dance, and it is my duty to think about this.*
>
> *Od.* 6.62-65

Another loving sister is Electra who, in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* addresses Orestes by calling him *φίλτατον μέλημα* and tells him that, to her, he represents the whole family: he is father, mother, sister and brother.[28] Her initial address is particularly telling, because μέλημα is a very intense word which expresses the concern inherent in loving someone. 'Sappho', too, could call 'Charaxos' *φίλτατον μέλημα*.

Both Nausicaa and Electra have indeed much in common with 'Sappho' because they, too, are young women driven by sisterly devotion and represent different but comparable facets of domesticity. On the other hand, if we look for Sappho's source of inspiration for Charaxos' story, we should probably look elsewhere.

Penelope, the waiting woman *par excellence*, arguably works as an archetypal paradigm for 'Sappho' waiting for Charaxos.[29] A general connec-

27. Peponi 2016, 230-233.
28. Aesch. *Choeph*. 235-243.
29. Gribble 2016, 60.

tion with the *Odyssey* has been suggested by many scholars, who construe Charaxos as a counterpart of Odysseus, and Larichos as a counterpart of Telemachus.[30] An argument in favour of this interpretation is the rare word ἀρτέμεας, which occurs in *Odyssey* 13.42 in Odysseus' prayer for a safe return home: in Sappho's line 13 ἀρτέμεας could be a Homeric quotation.

While Odyssean suggestions cannot be ruled out, the Trojan saga is the obvious place to look at to detect the rough materials Sappho used in her "Charaxos songs". It's well known that Lesbian poets have a particular interest in the myths related to the Trojan War and the Trojan royal family. Antonio Aloni speaks of a "Lesbian Iliad",[31] by which he doesn't mean the existence of a Lesbian version of our *Iliad*, but a set of local traditions on the Trojan saga which were independent from the Ionian tradition. This is indirectly confirmed by the attribution to a Lesbian poet, Lesches of Mytilene or Pyrrha, of the *Little Iliad*, whose composition can be dated to 7th-6th century BC, i.e. to the time of Sappho and Alcaeus.

Episodes pointing to Lesbian Iliadic traditions can be traced in what survives of the epic Cycle. It's the case of the *Aethiopis*, whose first section narrated the arrival at Troy of the queen of the Amazons, Penthesileia, her heroic deeds, her fight with Achilles, her death and her funeral. In Proclus' summary we read that Thersites, reviling and reproaching Achilles by saying that he loved Penthesileia, was killed by him. From this a quarrel arose among the Achaeans about Thersites' murder: "Achilles sailed to Lesbos, sacrificed to Apollo, Artemis, and Leto and was purified of the murder by Odysseus".[32]

The focus on Lesbos is particularly interesting. The connection of Apollo with purification is usual; and the triad formed by Apollo, Artemis and Leto is well known, but is usually associated with Delos rather than with Lesbos. Martin West suggests that Achilles' journey to Lesbos and his

30. See for example Kurke 2016, 249-251; Sironi 2018, 70-72.
31. Aloni 1986, 55-64.
32. Procl. *Chrest*. 182-184 Severyns.

purification may come from an earlier, independent *Amazonis* and may reflect some local interest.[33] He wonders if this *Amazonis* (which may go back to 640-630 BC) was the work of a Lesbian poet. This attribution is tempting, because the episode of Achilles being struck by the beauty of the dying Penthesileia is a romantic element which seems to belong to the general tone of the Lesbian songs about Troy.

The Lesbian take on epics is coloured by a strong interest in love and erotism. One need only think of Sappho's portrait of Helen: in fr. 16 Helen is perceived as the archetype of the loving woman who is ready to sacrifice everything for her passion. However, the Lesbian Achilles –as far as we can reconstruct him– was also sensitive to love.

As Martin West observes,[34] the *Iliad* repeatedly mentions Achilles' actions of plundering and destroying towns in the region of the North-East Aegean Sea, all around Troy. Some of them are in the Troad (Lyrnessos, Pedasos, Hypoplakian Thebe), others in the islands of Skyros, Tenedos, Lesbos. All these deeds are personal exploits of Achilles and have very little to do with the conduct of the war by Agamemnon, who remains by the Hellespont with the other Achaeans and receives the booty.

Two points must be stressed. Firstly, the locations of Achilles' raids correspond to an area which is separated from Troy and reflects the perspectives and the interests of the Aeolic Greeks based on Lesbos. That is to say: Achilles' raids cover the territory which the Lesbians look at as their own range of action. Secondly, in most cases the booty consists in women, who are selected because of their outstanding beauty: the seven women whom Agamemnon offers to Achilles in *Iliad* 9.130 are Lesbian and the very name of Briseis has been interpreted as "the girl of Brisa", a place in Lesbos.[35] Diomede, the girl whom Achilles lies with when he and Patroclus prepare for the night at the end of *Iliad* 9, is also from Lesbos.[36]

33. West 2013, 143.
34. West 2011, 43.
35. Hainsworth 1993, 75; Tsantsanoglou 2019, 160.
36. *Il.* 9.664-665.

The evidence suggests that Achilles was in all likelihood a key character in Lesbian epic songs: there were local stories claiming that the hero was here and there in the island, killed such-and-such a king, had intercourse with such-and-such a woman. Alcaeus, too, shows an interest in Achilles: fr. 44 is a curious short poem focused on the hero's prayer to his mother and on Thetis' supplication to Zeus.

All these elements converge on the conclusion that the Lesbian poets, when they treat the Trojan myth, are influenced by local traditions which stress the role of Lesbos in the Iliadic saga and can diverge from the versions adopted in our *Iliad* (and *Odyssey*).[37]

This applies to Sappho as well and must be taken into consideration also for the interpretation of the "Charaxos songs". Fr. 17 is a prayer to Hera, which is imagined to be uttered in the sanctuary of Messon on the occasion of the local festival (ἑόρτα, v. 2). To reinforce her supplication, Sappho says that this is the place where the Atreids, too, invoked Hera, Zeus and Dionysos in order to find the best way home. The episode is also mentioned in *Odyssey* 3.141-175 where Nestor narrates that he, Menelaus and Diomedes arrived on Lesbos after leaving Troy and asked a god to indicate them which route to choose in order to cross the sea safely. The episode is the same but the Lesbian version adopted by Sappho is quite different from Nestor's: both Atreids are there and their arrival at Lesbos is presented as the foundational *aition* of the Messon festival.[38] It is evident that Sappho's version depends on a tradition which stresses the relevance of the island to the Trojan war.

Another allusion to the Messon sanctuary may be traced in *Odyssey* 4.341-345, where Menelaus wishes that Odysseus could fight against the suitors with the same strength he showed as he wrestled with Philomeleides in Lesbos, and hit him so heavily that all the Greeks cheered him.

37. Spelman 2017, 745.

38. They address their prayer, quite specifically, to the Lesbian triad: see Caciagli 2016, 435.

The scholiast says[39] that Philomeleides was a king of Lesbos who used to challenge the visitors to wrestle; as the Achaeans arrived on the island, he challenged them and was killed by Odysseus and Diomedes. If in Sappho's fr. 17.6 we read *πὲρ Ἤ[ραον* instead of *πὲρ Ἴ[λιον* the "great games" (*μ[εγά]λοις ἄεθλοις*) are not the heroic deeds around Ilium, but the great athletic contests the Atreids organized around the Heraion for recreation of the army,[40] and these competitions could be the occasion for the victory of Odysseus over Philomeleides.

Sappho seems to be extremely attracted by the literary game of rekindling characters and situations of the Iliadic saga by giving them an independent new life. Fr. 44 is a phantasy of luxury, luminosity and harmony which celebrates Hector and Andromache's splendid marriage: the joyful moment is projected onto a sort of timeless dimension, as if the painful destiny of the couple were not worth considering. It has been suggested that the mythical model behind Sappho's song may be not so much *Iliad* 6, but a local Lesbian tradition on the wedding celebrated by Paris and Helen at their arrival at Ilion.[41] The *Cypria*'s account of Paris' return ("and Paris sailed to Troy and celebrated a wedding with Helen")[42] and a Corinthian crater from around 580 BC, in which this wedding is depicted,[43] show that the scene was familiar to Sappho's audience. The arrival by sea of groom and bride at the port of Troy and the festive welcome of the Trojans is a scenario which applies to both episodes; the poet speaks of Hector and Andromache but the audience can't help but recall the other couple, whose arrival has been indeed much more important for the destiny of Troy.

If we accept this reading, Sappho's fr. 44 can be compared to other fragments in which Lesbian poets refer to unions and sexual desires of myth-

39. He quotes Hellan. *FGrHist* 4 F 150.

40. Tsantsanoglou 2019, 150.

41. Spelman 2017, 747-749.

42. Procl. *Chrest.* 104-105 Severyns.

43. New York, Metr. Mus. 27.116; *LIMC* I 1, 512 (Alexandros 67); the names of Alexandros and Helen are inscribed by the ceramographer.

ical couples to reflect on what these relationships mean for human communities. The Trojan myth plays a pivotal role in this discussion. Fr. 42 of Alcaeus proposes a contrastive comparison of Peleus and Thetis' wedding (which produces a splendid offspring) with Paris and Helen's, which causes the destruction of the city. Something very similar is found in Alcaeus' fr. 283, where it is said that Paris and Helen's union was destructive on both sides: intoxicated by eros, she eft her husband and her child, while he caused the death of many of his brothers (*κασιγνήτων πόλεας*, v. 12). Sappho's fr. 16 also focuses on the infatuation of Helen and her unfaithfulness to her family.

In the "Charaxos songs" 'Sappho' describes the extent to which her brother's passion for Doricha can damage their family. It's tempting to think that the Trojan myth, and the "Paris' story" in particular, is once again in the poet's mind.[44]

Indeed, Sappho's extant fragments abound in elements that point to Paris. In the "Brothers Poem" 'Sappho' says to the addressee that she / he should ask her to go pray Hera because a divine help would be welcome in their critical situation. In *Iliad* book 6, Helenus urges his brother Hector to reach Troy and ask Hecuba to visit Athena's temple and pray her to protect the Trojans from the savage fury of Diomedes.[45] The queen selects her finest dress as a gift for the goddess: the poet says that it's one of the precious garments which Paris brought to Troy from Sidon as he came back home with Helen.[46] These elaborate robes, embroidered by Sidonian women, are part of the luxury goods which the young prince has brought home from his journey; undoubtedly, 'Sappho' hopes to receive a similar *timè* from her brother.[47]

44. Stehle 2016, 289-290.

45. *Il.* 6.86-97.

46. *Il.* 6.289-292.

47. Sapph. fr. 5, 9-10: *τὰν κασιγνήταν δὲ θέλοι πόησθαι μέσδονος τίμας* ("And may he want to put his sister in a position of greater honour").

From the *Cypria* and from Apollodorus' *Epitome* we learn that Paris, as he was sailing back to Troy from Sparta together with Helen, had to face a storm sent by Hera.[48] It's probably not a coincidence that the same goddess who made Paris' return difficult is asked to propitiate Charaxos' safe return. Herodot II 135 says that after his return Charaxos was rebuked by his sister.[49] In *Iliad* 3.38-57 Hector rebukes Paris with harsh words: he reproaches his brother for having sailed to a far-off land and brought back a fair woman, the spouse of fierce fighters, which has been a source of woe for the city and a cause for shame for himself.

Paris is a merchant prince who travels by sea, falls in love with the most beautiful woman and returns home with his ship full of rich merchandise; his family and his city suffer the consequences of his shameful conduct. Are we allowed to construe him a model for Lesbian Charaxos?

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48. Procl. *Chrest*. 103 Severyns; Apollod. *Epit*. 3.4.
49. See supra note 8 (866).

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FEMALE LISTENER AND MONSTRUOUS PERFORMER: PENELOPE IN VARGAS LLIOSA'S *ODISEO Y PENELOPE*

In 2006 Mario Vargas Llosa wrote and starred in his own version of the *Odyssey*, *Odiseo y Penélope*, premiered at the Roman Theatre in Mérida (Spain), with Joan Ollé as director and Aitana Sánchez-Gijón as co-actor. This play and staging corresponds to the most recent stage in the theatrical production by Vargas Llosa, in which, through varying degrees of metatheatrical and metafictional reading, acting and enactment, the Nobel laureate has encountered great works of world literature, including *La verdad de las mentiras* (2005), on an anthological literary selection by him, his own take on *The thousand and one nights*, *Las mil noches y una noche* (2008), and his version of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, *Los Cuentos de la Peste* (2015), all co-performed by Sánchez-Gijón (and others in the latter) and directed by Joan Ollé. As a stage version of the *Odyssey*, *Odiseo y Penélope* shows Odiseo telling his wife Penélope of his adventures and amorous exploits after their marital recognition and carnal reconciliation in the *Odyssey* (23.300-343). Although Vargas Llosa skilfully chooses to set his play during one of the few superficially, yet intriguingly, sketched instances in the poem, in which Odysseus confesses it all to his wife, the chronologically linear narrative structure of *Odiseo y Penélope* does not do justice to either the structural complexity of the *Odyssey* or Vargas Llosa's own narrative mastery in novels such as *Conversación en la catedral*. *Odiseo y Penélope* is opened by a Narrator who introduces the play, followed by a series of dramatic tableaus that stage, in order: Penélope and Odiseo discussing Odiseo's absence, the cave of Polyphemus, Circe, Hades, Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, the Sun's cattle, Calypso, Nausicaa and the Phaeacians, Odiseo's return to Ithaca and the killing of the suitors. These tableaus are narrated by Odiseo, aided by narrations, citations and performances by Penélope. Odysseus

is thus characterised here not as the renowned hero and Trojan veteran, but as the renowned narrator, storyteller and loquacious trickster. In doing this, the play on occasion seems to question the truthfulness of Odiseo's account and undermine the honesty of any storytelling, in line with much of Vargas Llosa's theatrical work,[1] as he himself claims:

> "Odysseus is an ambiguous character, he cannot be boxed in. He slips away from any attempt to classify him as an unquestionable personality. This ambiguity is part of his appeal: to be, at once, within reality and within fantasy, in history and myth, in deceit and truth, in what has been lived and what has been dreamt."[2]

The few critics to have examined this play seem to have been seduced by the charm of Odiseo and Vargas Llosa and by the trickery of narrative manipulation at the heart of it.[3] This has stimulated appreciations of the intra- and extra-textual relationship between biography and autobiography, of the inebriating rhapsodic mastery of Odiseo, of the challenges of adaptation or of its fusion of epic and dramatic styles. However, no critic addresses one of the most prescient issues in the play: it is a play of a husband telling of his exploits to his wife, who assists him and acts out the roles of the monsters and lovers he has encountered. On closer inspection, and with some critical reading, one discovers that, perhaps unintentionally but nevertheless unquestionably, *Odiseo y Penélope* is a play about the narcissistic and misogynistic control of the male authoritative voice in the narration of subjective experience and explicative truth, delegating women to the status of necessary tool or feared and/or desired symbol. If one analyses the role and functionality of Penélope in the play, the conspicuousness of phallogocentric narrative is revealed in great clarity. As shall be explored in this

1. For overviews and discussions of Vargas Llosa's theatrical oeuvre see Firshburn 2012; Guichot Muñoz 2011; Köllman 2014; Landa 2016; Meléndez 2012, 2013; Rivera-Rodas 1992.

2. Vargas Llosa 2007: 152. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

3. See Peñalosa De La Riva Fort 2016; Fishburn 2012, 186-187; Köllman 2014; Landa 2016; Meléndez 2012, 100-102; 2013: 194; Peñalosa Montero 2017.

paper, Penélope becomes the narrative assistant and actorial illustrator of Odiseo's narrative authority, falling victim to an ontological instability in which she becomes, at the service of *his* narrative construction, what Odiseo either fears or needs, all for the benefit of his own masculine ego and dominance, which culminates with their sexual re-encounter at the end of the play. Penélope is used in Odiseo's construction of male and patriarchal objective and subjective dominance of truth and reality.

1. Penélope the assistant

Let us firstly focus on Penélope's structural role within *Odiseo y Penélope*. At first glance one could believe that the idea of telling the story of the *Odyssey* between Odysseus and his wife in a hybrid style that mixes narration and dramatic re-enaction offers a rather egalitarian spin on the Homeric epic. One could imagine the couple finally acting out, in conjunction and on stage, their renowned like-mindedness, bringing to the fore Penelope's own narrative and active capabilities.[4] However, when one dissects how the story is told in *Odiseo y Penélope*, it is Odiseo who is largely in charge of the development of the story and Penélope appears not as an equal narrator, but as a passive listener, as a subordinate narrative assistant and as an actor of Odiseo's script. Penélope is the tool for Odiseo to tell his story, not his partner in creating it.

Despite the on-stage activity Penélope displays, her main role is to be a largely passive listener to Odiseo. She knows nothing of her husband's whereabouts in the previous twenty years and she stops Odiseo's renewed amorous attempt to ask him for the whole story, thus becoming the internal audience in the play, standing in for the external audience in the theatre. This in turn places the narrative authority with Odiseo, making Penélope 'a weak dramatic filter of a primarily epic style of performance', as de la Riva Fort has correctly observed.[5] With very few exceptions,

4. For different perspectives on this see e.g. Clayton 2004; Doherty 1995: 31-64; Felson-Rubin 1994; Foley 1995; Heitman 2005; Katz 1991; Murnaghan 2009.

5. De La Riva Fort 2016: 299.

Penélope largely leaves Odiseo's story undisputed and unquestioned. It is he who is telling the story. After all, it is the same actor, and also the play's author, Vargas Llosa, who plays the introductory Narrator (pp. 17-18) and Odiseo,[6] in a possible autobiographical performance of the writer's own self.[7] Penélope, however, is there to listen.

But were Penélope to be simply a passive listener, her dramatic role would be undeveloped and redundant. Odiseo could simply appear on stage speaking directly to the audience. However, this would eliminate the excuse for Vargas Llosa's play: to illustrate their intimate interaction after their reunion. Penélope is necessary to a play entitled, precisely, *Odiseo y Penélope*. Penélope, in the play, has two main modes of involvement: as assistant narrator, which interrupts her role as listener, and as performer, which does not. Despite some discussion of her situation at the beginning and the end of the play (pp. 22-24, 95-103, 107-108, 111-113), coincidentally the moments set in the present, and the very occasional questioning or signs of jealousy, Penélope serves to help Odiseo advance in his narration, often through questions or hints aiding the dramatic flow of the storytelling. But Penélope also uses rather more baffling techniques: she sometimes narrates actions and quotes words in Odiseo's story she apparently has no knowledge about and sets up the scene for them to be acted out: 'When the Cyclops returned with his herds of goats and sheep and took two more of your companions to eat them, you stepped up and offered him the wineskin', Penélope explains (p. 31) This anomaly may be due to the underlying intellectual questioning of storytelling and its truthfulness in the play, or even a comment on pre-existing knowledge of literary masterpieces. It may even hint towards aspects of Classical Reception. Indeed, Penélope's knowledge can be read as an enigma that questions knowledge and truth in storytelling and literature. But there is another way of reading it: Penélope is a tool for Odiseo and Vargas Llosa's male authorial voice, who knows

6. All page numbers referenced correspond to Vargas Llosa 2007.
7. Meléndez 2012: 100-102; 2013: 194.

what she should not only when it is suitable. She is the narrative and directorial assistant to the staging of Odiseo's adventures. Penélope never offers an alternative or questioning take on the narration offered by Odiseo, the *Odyssey* or Vargas Llosa, despite Meléndez's assertion to the contrary.[8] This is not the *Penelopiad*. It is Odiseo's story:

> PENÉLOPE. "This is no longer the time for love, but the time for stories. Continue telling your story".
>
> ODISEO. "Let it be our story, Penélope. Help me construct it. Share it with me. I am not completely sure of it myself and my memory of it is messy. Let us resurrect it together, as if we had both lived it".
>
> PENÉLOPE. "Do you want us to play at inventing the past, Odiseo?"
>
> ODISEO. "Not at inventing it, but at making it, living it truthfully, again, abut this time together. The past is malleable like clay, it is as dependent on us as the future, Penélope".
>
> PENÉLOPE. "Alright. Let's begin. When you escaped the Lotophagi, the tide dragged you to…". (pp. 24-25)

Penélope's other mode of involvement, however, does not interrupt her role as passive listener. When Odiseo and Penélope break from the presentness of the bedroom and enter the scene being narrated, Penélope often plays the role of the other character involved in that scene. She plays Polyphemus (pp. 30-34), Circe (pp. 40-44, 55-56), Tiresias (pp. 47-48), Anticlea (pp. 49-50), Nausicaa (pp. 86-87), Calypso (pp. 78-81), Euriclea (p. 98), and even Eumaeus (p. 101), to name a few. This should be understood as a parallel mode of involvement, working at a different fictional location than the presentness in which she is listening to Odiseo's story, a doubled reality common to Vargas Llosa's plays.[9] It should also be noticed that this mode is full enactment and not the indirect speech Penélope uses as narrative assistant. Penélope here becomes the characters she plays. The limitation

8. Meléndez 2012: 100.
9. See Firshburn 2012; Köllman 2014.

of having two actors on stage forces the actor playing Penélope, in Mérida Aitana Sánchez-Gijón, to play all the other characters; and since there is no marked separation between her character and the others, audiences understandably can interpret that it is Penélope who becomes the characters confronted by Odiseo. This enactment is only taken up by Penélope. Odiseo never performs any other role but his own, with the exception of giving voice only to two *male* heroic characters: Achilles in Hades (p. 52) and Eurylochus (pp. 69-71). Despite Vargas Llosa's claim that one of the attractive propositions of Greek culture and the *Odyssey* is the ontological instability of characters,[10] in his own take on the *Odyssey*, the only character to be ontologically unstable is Penélope, who becomes the monsters, lovers, helpers and enemies of the ontologically stable and coherent male hero. It is the deceptive female shape-shifter who illustrates and explains the narrative discourse of the male authoritative, reliable and firm male voice[11].

2. Penélope the woman

The main group of roles Penélope plays are female characters. As the tool illustrating the male and patriarchal narrative and authoritative discourse of Odiseo, Penélope becomes and enacts female roles that fall into three main categories coinciding with those ascribed to women by patriarchal power through the Madonna-whore dichotomy: whore, wife and mother. 'The madonna/whore dichotomy runs through western patriarchal culture as the means whereby men have sought to ensure both the sanctity and inheritance of their families and their extra-familial sexual pleasure',[12] explains Barrett in words that could clearly describe Odiseo as character and internal playwright/director in *Odiseo y Penélope*. The women Penélope plays are thus in fact manifestations of a masculinist discourse and fantasy that even manages to erase one of the few pro-female discourses in Ho-

10. Vargas Llosa 2007: 154.

11. This seems to contrast a critique of sexism and machismo in other plays by Vargas Llosa, see Köllman 2014.

12. Barrett 2014: 45.

mer's *Odyssey*, Calypso's complaint of erotic double standards (5.116-144). Therefore, Penélope, in playing the women in Odiseo's story, seems to be calling him 'My child! My master, my owner!', as she does when voicing Euriclea (p. 98).

Given her renowned status as the faithful and resilient wife yearning for the return of her husband in epic, myth and Western cultural history, it is no surprise that Penélope embodies herself the role of the archetypal wife in *Odiseo y Penélope*. The play begins and ends by highlighting Penélope as the faithful and yearning wife giving meaning to Odiseo's belonging and keeping his property and status safe in his absence:

> PENÉLOPE. "I was always sure that you would come back. The augurs would tell me so, as did my heart when I felt like fainting. […] It was good that so many men aspired to succeed you on the throne, because by giving hope to each one, by making them fight each other, I could gain time. It would have been less easy to fool just one".
>
> (pp. 95-96)

Penélope's yearning for the wholeness of matrimony with the absent Odiseo as wife is expanded by other female characters she plays, as if all other women were also eager to marry and unite with Odiseo. Circe, Calypso and Nausicaa all voice a common complaint: their incompleteness as women in need of Odiseo. 'Only with you have I felt that life reached me, tremulous and exalting, with desire, with love', Circe confesses to Odiseo (pp. 42-43); 'I would have loved to be married to you', Nausicaa confesses to the hero (p. 87). Odiseo, however, is never in need of completion; he is the completer. Moreover, Odiseo explicitly says to Penélope: 'Not even you, with all your beauty and love, will fill the whole left by my dead companions in my soul' (p.66). Women are to be completed, not complete men. These women thus embody the male patriarchal fantasy by which women are empty vessels to be filled and given meaning by their union with a man; an idea repeated in the cases of Penélope, Circe, Calipso and Nausicaa, all performed by none other than his faithful wife, incomplete until his return:

> CALIPSO. "You are different [to other men], Odiseo. When the storm launched you to this island and I came up to you and saw you full of wounds, entangled in those lichens, naked, something strange happened to me. I was very moved, as if I was looking at a little animal caught in a trap. And when I helped you walk, feeling your body close to mine, my heart started pounding really fast, here in my chest. Until then I didn't know I had a heart. Perhaps I didn't need it. Now, thanks to you, I know I have one". (p. 78)

The other subservient role *Odiseo y Penélope* reserves for the women played by Penélope is that of the whore, the erotically available and willing satisfier of Odiseo's male ego and desire. It is true that a large part of the *Odyssey*'s story is Odysseus' prowess in seduction and love-making; however, what is distinct in *Odiseo y Penélope* is the explicitness of the sexuality involved, a sexuality only activated and yearnful in the women, not in Odiseo. On several occasions, the characters of Penélope, Circe, Calypso and Nausicaa voice their erotic attraction towards the male hero and their eagerness for carnal union with him, to the extent of explicitly describing their physically intimate response to him, turning *Odiseo y Penélope* occasionally into a bad erotic adaptation of Odysseus' amorous exploits. But what is most clear in these sexually charged moments is that they seem to be there not as a manifestation of female sexuality but as satisfiers of Odiseo's sexual ego, to the extent of having Nausicaa explicitly wish to lose her virginity with him (p. 87). Furthermore, while in the *Odyssey* the Sirens are primarily creatures of profound knowledge with which they wish to lure Odysseus, in *Odiseo y Penélope* their knowledgeable status is nowhere to be seen: the Sirens, played by Penélope, are sexually eager and wanting creatures wishing to lure Odiseo: 'Come and enjoy yourself with us […] Our arms long for you!' (p. 57). Most revealingly, Penélope gives voice to the female shadows in Hades that coincide with the catalogue of women in the *Odyssey* (11.225-332), all renowned for either suffering or pursuing sexual transgression (pp. 50-51). Even the yearning of the good wife for her absent husband is eroticised in the play, when in a dream she can sense his arrival in Ithaca:

> PENÉLOPE. "In the dream I could feel you. Other times, your image appeared, and it would dissolve or disappear, and I would wake up sad and upset. No, no. This time was different. I could feel your body, running over me, entangling itself, entering my own. It was physical. I could smell your sweat, your breathing would penetrate my ears. I could feel your hands caressing me from my head to my feet, frenetically, with ardour. It did not feel like a dream. It was reality. I woke up, shaking like a little flame against the wind". (p. 108)

As a reinforcement of this sexually subservient role demanded of the women played by Penélope in the play, female sexuality that is not directed at Odiseo must be punished, as is the case of the maids, for which Penélope has only a fleeting moment of sadness after their hanging (p. 111). Female sexuality, as represented in Penélope playing the whore in different characters, thus appears in the hero's narration and in the play as the eager vessel waiting to be conquered and filled, this time, by the physical and sexual prowess of the male hero. The play itself closes with the victory of Odiseo in charming and convincing a previously reluctant Penélope (p. 24) into having another sexual encounter as a result of his storytelling of heroic and amorous exploits, a detail not to be found in Homer:

> PENÉLOPE. "Dawn is now approaching. Are we going to continue to remember your adventures or do you want to rest?"
>
> ODISEO. (*Imitating her*) "This is no longer the time for stories, but, once again, the time for love;
>
> *In the darkness, we can hear Penélope's laughter.* (p. 112-113)

Finally, Penélope performs another archetypal role the patriarchal system ascribes to women: the role of carer, helper, mother. Penélope performs the roles of Odiseo's patron god and goddess, Athena (pp. 88, 90-92) and Hermes, the latter being the adviser of his erotic treatment of Circe (pp. 39-40); she also performs as Tiresias (pp. 47-48), Alcinous (pp. 88-90), Eumaeus (p. 101), Euriclea (p. 98), or Ino (p. 85), all faithful carers and helpers of Odiseo. But most revealingly, Penélope plays precisely Odiseo's moth-

er, Anticlea, in a scene emphasising, on stage, the ontological instability of Penélope and the layers of symbolic and patriarchal meaning embodied by her. Odiseo's lament and yearning for the marital-maternal figure before him highlights the dependency and manipulation he makes of the women in his life for his own benefit and needs:

> ANTICLEA. "Sadness killed me, my son. While I still had hope of your return, I hung on to life. […] But your ship never appeared. One day I resigned myself: he will never return. He is already in Hades. All I can do is join him. I am relieved that you are alive. I cannot do much for you, but what I can do I will do. I love you very much, Odiseo".
>
> ODISEO. "Three times I tried to embrace her and three times she vanished from my arms as a mirage. I cried realising that I would never hear her laugh, tell me off, give me her lucid advice". (pp. 49-50)

3. Penélope the monster

If Penélope is to become the female archetypes that serve patriarchal fantasies and structures, it seems somewhat fitting that she will also play the opposite, becoming the enemy, the other, the threat to the rule of the male hero. But these roles do not appear as tools with which to subvert the discourse and authority of Odiseo. On the contrary, their defeat at his hands only serves to confirm the superiority of the male hero and his rule.

Although Penélope does give voice to the suitors at the beginning (p. 22), her performance of the monsters in the story is the most revealing ontological shifts of all she enacts. While playing the female roles and their aspects as wives, whores or mothers serves the patriarchal discourse, it could also represent the performance of women's multifaceted nature conforming to patriarchal expectations. However, to make Penélope, the woman on-stage, play the monsters, many female too, underlines the ultimately shifty, untrustworthy and ignoble nature of women, the opposite of noble and heroic manhood. This moral hierarchy is perhaps best revealed in Penélope playing Polyphemus (p. 29-34), who is soon to be blinded by another of Odiseo's phallic weapons, the burning spike. For Penélope to be-

come the man-eating barbarous and godless giant threatening the hero yet vanquished by his ingenuity evidences both the danger of women's apparent monstruous nature and men's abilities to fool and wound it. Penelope/Polyphemus the man-eater is soon to be conquered by male valour and pierced by his ingenuity:

> POLYPHEMUS. "We cyclops do not respect the gods, because we are stronger than them. We are not welcoming either. And, do you know what we do with the fools that fall into our hands? We eat them!"
>
> ODISEO. "He launched himself on us, took two of my men and smashed them against the ground ferociously. The giant broke them into pieces and ate them. Whole. Their guts, their flesh, their bones! He chewed and swallowed making disgusting noises. Now and then he would drink huge jars of milk. And he would burp. His burps shook the stones in the cave. At last, he fell asleep. My men were frozen in terror. They trembled". […]
>
> ODISEO. "Then, I brought the stake closer to the fire and, as soon as it was about to catch fire, with my four companions we took it out and with all our strength in our arms we stabbed it in his eye. "Take it, bloody Polyphemus!". His howling was music to our ears. His pupil crackled, the blood leaked down the stake and there was a delicious smell of charred meat filled the cave". (pp. 30-33)

However, despite his male valour and piercing ingenuity, Odiseo is twice warned by Circe, played by Penélope, that his phallic sword will not serve him against the untamed female monstrosity of the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, which Penélope voices in the case of the former (pp. 87-88), and narrates in the case of the latter two (pp. 65-66). Such is the potential danger of women that fears in Odiseo's men of being caught by Persephone holding the Gorgon's head force them to leave Hades in haste (p. 52). The monster in women can often be defeated but not always vanquished by patriarchal power. A cautionary tale for all manly heroes:

> ODISEO. […] "Since then, many nights the howling of the six com-

panions Scylla killed thunder in my head and I wake up, bathed in sweat. That was the saddest thing I have ever had to witness out of all that I've seen traveling the sea's paths".

PENÉLOPE. "Just now, not long ago, after you made love to me, you fell asleep in my arms and I suddenly felt how you trembled like a boy in the cold. Your face was wet with tears. Were you dreaming of them, Odiseo?". (p. 66)

It is important to note that this monstruous category enacted by Penélope as every woman in relation to the patriarchal Odiseo is indeed a threat to male power and authority but disguised with a monstruous mask. A mortal woman cannot be directly represented, in this symbolic economy, as either danger or opposition, for this might seed the possibility of women being conceived as other than subservient and in need of men. Women can only be these threatening possibilities if they act as a monster, but never if they act as women, whose power and political transgressions are not even fathomable to this world vision. There is only one realm in which they can potentially show independent agency: the sharing of their bodies. It is for this reason perhaps that Vargas Llosa adds one of the few original incidents in his play. While Penélope is proudly explaining how she played the suitors off each other, Odiseo suddenly becomes jealous, unlike in the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus seems to be gleefully proud of how his wife tricks the suitors (18.281-283). As a result of Odiseo's jealousy, Penélope asks what would have happened had he found her already married on his return. Odiseo, as the male hero he is, can only see her execution and the dismemberment of her lover as the just reward for such an insulting transgression by female agency. Women's betrayal of and insubordination against the patriarchal system can only be met with their killing:

PENÉLOPE. "And had you found me married would you have killed me too with your bloody sword?"

ODISEO. "Not with my sword. I would have killed you with my own hands. I would have cut off your husband's ear, his tongue and his nose; and also, very slowly, his cock and his testicles, which I would

> have fed to the vultures. Next, instead of taking the throne, I would have left forever this island to roam the world as the beggar that Pallas Athene made me. I would have tried to earn a living telling stories". (p. 96)

Conclusion

When reading or watching *Odiseo y Penélope*, one could easily be seduced by the charm of Odiseo in telling his well-known stories, or by the interest in reading one of the most renowned novelists of our time retelling the *Odyssey*, or even by the underlying questioning and exploration of storytelling at large. The Narrator indeed claims that 'The Odyssey is a world of stories and liberated appetites' (p. 17), preparing us for what is in stall. However, *Odiseo y Penélope* portrays a world in which the stories and liberated appetites are all only Odiseo's own. The other half of the title, play and stage, Penélope, is revealed, on closer critical inspection, as the passive listener, the narrative and directorial assistant and actor of Odiseo's own male narrative authority. Particularly in her actorial role, Penélope portrays female characters fitting the patriarchal headings of wife, whore and mother, as well as the monsters and the potentially unfaithful wife that threaten the power of the male hero. Penélope does not have her own independent agency, voice or thoughts. All she does, perhaps including the very few instances of jealousy and questioning, is be the necessary tool for the construction of Odiseo's male patriarchal discourse, narrative and fantasy in *Odiseo y Penélope*. Penélope, ever elusive in the *Odyssey*, is here but an avatar of her husband's storytelling. In Vargas Llosa's play, the *Odyssey* is Odysseus's story, more than ever.

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EYPETHPIA / INDICES

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